



**AMERICAN  
LEGION**

**CONSTITUTION  
AND  
BY-LAWS**

**OF**

**THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS**

Revised July 14, 2024

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# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

## ARTICLE I - NAME AND CHARTER

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this organization shall be THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS.

**Section 2. Charter.** The American Legion, Department of Texas, is an integral part of The American Legion as provided in Section 1, Article VIII, of the National Constitution, and chartered by the National Organization. It is incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.

**Section 3. Location of Headquarters.** The Department Headquarters shall be located in the Metropolitan area of the city of Austin, Texas.

## ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

**Section 1. Objects and Purposes.** The objects and purposes of this Department shall be to promote the principles and policies set forth in the foregoing Preamble and the National Constitution of The American Legion.

**Section 2. No Military Rank.** The American Legion, Department of Texas, is a civilian organization; membership therein does not affect nor increase liability for military or police service. Rank does not exist in the Legion; no member shall be addressed by his military or naval title in any convention or meeting of the Legion.

**Section 3. Nonpolitical.** The American Legion, Department of Texas, shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.

## ARTICLE III - ELIGIBILITY AND MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1. Eligibility Dates and Discharge.** Any person shall be eligible for membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION who was a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to the present; all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the governments

associated with the United States during any of said periods; provided, however, that such service shall have been terminated by honorable discharge or honorable separation, or continued honorably after any of said periods; provided further, that no person shall be entitled to membership who, being in such service during any of said periods, refused on conscientious, political or other grounds to subject himself to military discipline or unqualified service.

**Section 2. One Class of Membership.** There shall be no form or class of membership except active membership. Membership shall be only through a local Post, and dues shall be paid annually or for life.

**Section 3. Membership in Only One Post.** No person may be a member at any one time of more than one Post in The American Legion.

**Section 4. Admitting Expelled Member.** No person who has been expelled by a Post shall be admitted to membership in another Post without the consent of the expelling Post, except that where such consent has been denied by such post, he may then appeal to the Executive Committee of the Department of the expelling Post for permission to be admitted to membership in another post and shall be ineligible for membership until such permission is granted.

**Section 5. Post Sole Judge of Membership.** Each Post shall be the judge of its own membership, subject only to the restrictions of the National and Department Constitution and By-Laws.

**Section 6. Transfers.** Any member in good standing, to include members of Headquarters Post 345, moving or transferring to another Post shall be transferred using The American Legion Member Data Form, completed by the new Post, without additional payment of dues. The new Post shall be the judge of its own membership in accordance with Article III, Section 5, Department of Texas Constitution and Bylaws. No member may transfer to another Post after an Affidavit of Charges have been filed with the Post Adjutant commencing a disciplinary proceeding. Dues already paid shall remain with the original Post and the transfer shall be complete upon the issuance of a new membership card

**Section 7. Members Found to be Ineligible.** If a Post determines one of its members is not eligible for membership, the Post shall notify the Department Adjutant at once in writing so that his name can be forwarded to the National Headquarters for removal from the membership rolls. It shall be presumed that a member who will not furnish proof of eligibility within ninety (90) days of a written request, certified mail, return receipt requested is not eligible for membership in The American Legion.

**Section 8. Acceptance of Dues.**

**a. Delinquent.** A member whose dues for the current year have not been paid by January 1<sup>st</sup> shall be classed as delinquent. If his dues are paid on or before February 1<sup>st</sup>, he shall be automatically reinstated. If a member pays his dues by February 1<sup>st</sup>, the Post must accept the dues.

**b. Suspension and Forfeiture.** If he is still delinquent after February 1<sup>st</sup>, he shall be suspended from all privileges. He shall have no right to serve as an officer, be elected to office, or vote. If he is still under such suspension on June 30<sup>th</sup> of such year, his membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION shall be forfeited.

**c. Reinstatement.** A member so suspended or whose membership has been so forfeited may be reinstated to active membership in good standing by vote of the post and payment of current dues for the year in which reinstatement occurs. Provided, however, that the posts, departments, and the National Organization may waive the provisions hereof, upon payment of dues for the year in which reinstatement occurs, with reference to former members who have been prevented from the payment of dues by reason of active military service.

**Section 9. Establishing Dues.** A membership fee may be charged by each local Post. Annual dues for Department purposes shall be fixed for the ensuing year at each annual Department Convention, and in the event of failure of the Convention to act, the dues and charges of the preceding year shall be and remain in effect. The dues for the Department Headquarters Post 345 for the ensuing year shall be set at the Midwinter Conference by the Department Executive Committee. The amount of local Post dues shall be fixed by each Post.

**Section 10. National Dues.** National dues, as determined by the National Convention, shall be collected by the Department in accordance with the National and Department Constitution and By-Laws.

**Section 11. Voting on New Members.** All applications for membership and transfers in a Post shall be acted upon at the next Post General Membership Meeting following the making of such application or transfer, and shall, at such meeting, be accepted, rejected or referred for further investigation and consideration. If a majority of the members present at the Post General Membership Meeting cast their vote against the acceptance of such application, then such application shall be recorded as rejected.

**Section 12. Notice of Expelled Members.** The Department Adjutant shall notify all Posts in the Department of Texas and National Headquarters in writing of all members expelled by Posts in the Department.

**Section 13. Certificate of Good Standing.** Any member in good standing in a post who is moving from the State of Texas is entitled upon request to receive a certificate from his post stating the inclusive dates he was a member of the Post.

**Section 14. Eligibility to Hold Office**

**a. Dues Paid.** Any paid-up member in good standing of a Post in the Department of Texas may be elected or appointed to any office in the Department of Texas, except as otherwise provided herein.

**b. Documentation of Honorable Service.** No person shall be eligible for any office, commission, committee, or board in The American Legion, Department of Texas, or any Division, District or Post thereof, nor if elected or appointed, shall such person continue to hold such office, position or appointment, unless within thirty (30) days after such election or appointment such person shall have furnished proper and satisfactory evidence of honorable service, complying with Article III, Section 1 of the Constitution, to the Department Adjutant, in the case of Department, Division, and District Officers, and to the Post in the case of Post Officers.

## ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

**Section 1. Department Officers.** The Department Officers shall consist of a Department Commander, four (4) Department Vice Commanders, a Department Adjutant, a Department Treasurer, a Department Judge Advocate, a Department Historian, a Department Sergeant at Arms, a Department Chaplain, members of the Department Executive Committee, National Executive Committeeman and Alternate National Executive Committeeman.

**Section 2. Election and Terms of Department Officers.** The Department Commander, Department Treasurer, Department Judge Advocate, Department Historian and Department Sergeant at Arms shall be elected at the Department Convention; the four (4) Department Vice Commanders are to be elected at the Division Caucuses or Division Conventions. The District Commanders and District Vice Commanders shall be elected at the District Convention held in each District. The four (4) Department Vice Commanders, the District Commanders and District Vice Commanders elected shall be confirmed by the Department Convention. All elective officers shall serve for a term of one year, except the National Executive Committeeman, Alternate National Executive Committeeman, the District Commanders and District Vice Commanders, who shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors are elected and qualified.

### **Section 3. Other Provisions.**

**a. Not to Succeed Themselves.** The Department Commander, the four (4) Department Vice Commanders, Department Sergeant at Arms, , District Commanders and District Vice Commanders are not eligible to succeed themselves, unless serving an unexpired term.

**b. Officers to be Appointed.** The Department Chaplain shall be appointed annually by the incoming Department Commander, subject to confirmation by the Department Executive Committee. There may be an Assistant Department Sergeant at Arms appointed by the Department Commander and confirmed by the Department Executive Committee.

**c. Vacancy of Office of Commander.** In case of death, incapacity, resignation or vacancy of the Department Commander, the Department Adjutant shall immediately call a meeting of the Department Executive Committee to be held within fifteen (15) days from the date of occurrence to elect a Department Commander from among the four (4) Department Vice Commanders. The vacant position of Department Vice Commander will be filled as prescribed in Article IV, Section 4 (b).

### **d. Education Prerequisites.**

**(1) Elected Department Officers.** As a prerequisite to nominate for election to the following Department Offices, the candidate for the Office must have completed the most recent ALEI Basic Training Course:

- Department Commander
- Department Vice Commanders
- Department Historian
- Department Treasurer
- Department Judge Advocate
- Department Sergeant-at-Arms
- District Commanders

**(2) Other Department Officers.** Other Department, Division and District Officers and Department Chairmen of Commissions and Committees must complete the ALEI Basic Training Course within three (3) months of their election or appointment. Failure to complete the course within three (3) months will cause the position to become vacant without further action.

#### **Section 4. Divisions**

**a. Establishment; Elections.** The four (4) Divisions shall be designated by the Department Executive Committee. Each Department Vice Commander shall be a resident and member of a Post within that respective Division; each shall be elected annually at their respective Division Convention or Division Caucus and continue to reside in the respective Division during tenure of office.

**b. Vacancy of Office of a Department Vice Commander.** In case of death, resignation, relocation outside of the Division boundaries or the incapacitation of a Department Vice Commander which will cause the Department Vice Commander to miss a Division Convention, Division Caucus or Department Executive Committee meeting as scheduled, the Department Commander shall fill the vacancy (after conferring with the District Commanders of said Division) until the Department Vice Commander recovers or is replaced by the Department Commander.

**c. Convention.** Each Division shall hold at least one convention or caucus each year at the call of the Department Vice Commander, the dates of which shall be coordinated with the Department Commander and Department Adjutant. Summary of proceedings shall be forwarded by the Department Vice Commander to the Department Adjutant within thirty (30) days after the convention. In the event of failure or refusal by the Department Vice Commander to call a regular convention, three Posts in the Division shall have the authority to call the convention to be presided over by the Division Adjutant.

#### **Section 5. Districts**

##### **a. District Boundaries and Numbers**

**(1) Establishment.** American Legion Districts are hereby authorized. The Department Executive Committee shall designate the specific number and boundaries of Districts. Districts shall be designated by number and boundaries to serve the best interests and the purposes of The American Legion Department of Texas.

##### **(2) Re-districting**

**(a) Moving a Post to a New District.** If a post located in one district desires to move to an adjacent district, the affected districts can agree to move the Post to another district, subject to the approval of the Department Executive Committee.

**(b) Comprehensive Re-districting.** Re-districting affecting more than one district shall require the consent of each affected district and must be approved by the Department Executive Committee.

**(3) Merging of Districts.** If a district is to be dissolved and its territory and posts are to be allocated to one or more adjacent districts, it shall require the consent of all the affected districts and must be approved by the Department Executive Committee.

**(4) Realignment without District Consent.** Notwithstanding paragraph (3) above, the Department Executive Committee can, with a 2/3 majority vote, without the consent of the affected district, realign district boundaries, create new districts or dissolve existing Districts.

**(5) Notice to Post.** All posts that are affected by a proposed redistricting shall be given 30 days' notice prior to consideration by the Department Executive Committee.

**b. Elections.** The District Commander and District Vice Commander from evenly numbered Districts shall be elected in evenly numbered years; and those representing Districts numbered unevenly shall be elected in unevenly numbered years.

**c. Convention.** Each District shall hold at least one convention each year at the call of the District Commander, the dates of which shall be coordinated with the Department Commander and Department Adjutant. Summary of proceedings shall be forwarded by the District Commander to the Department Adjutant within thirty (30) days after the convention. In the event of failure or refusal by the District Commander to call a regular convention, three Posts in the District shall have the authority to call the convention to be presided over by the District Vice Commander.

#### **Section 6. District Commanders and Vice Commanders.**

**a. Eligibility.** Each District Commander and District Vice Commander shall be a member of a Post in the District from which elected and also shall be a resident of the District or the adjacent District. Failure of the District Commander to comply with these provisions shall cause the District Commander's office to be declared vacant by the Department Commander.

**b. Vacancy.** If the office of District Commander becomes vacant, the District Vice Commander will assume the office and perform the duties thereof until the next District Convention, at which time a District Commander shall be elected to fill the unexpired term. If the District Vice Commander fails to qualify then a majority of the Post Commanders shall appoint a District Commander to serve until the next District Convention at which time a District Commander and/or a District Vice Commander shall be elected to fill the unexpired term.

**Section 7. District Commander's Post-Convention Duties.** The District Commander presiding at each District Convention shall be responsible for forwarding a certified copy of the District officers, a listing of the National Convention Delegates and Alternate Delegates elected, and a copy of all resolutions passed at said Convention to the Department Adjutant within ten (10) days after the adjournment of such District Convention.

**Section 8. Commencement of Term of Office.** All Department officers, including the newly elected members of the Department Executive Committee, shall assume their respective duties at the time of adjournment of the Department Convention, except the National Executive Committeemen and Alternate National Executive Committeeman, whose two-year term shall commence immediately upon the adjournment of the National Convention next ensuing after their election and shall end at the adjournment of the second next succeeding annual convention.

**Section 9. Other Vacancies.** Vacancies in Department Offices not herein before or hereafter provided for shall be filled by the Department Commander subject to the confirmation by the Department Executive Committee at its next meeting, and written notice of such action mailed to all Posts.

**Section 10. Removal of Adjutant.** The Department Executive Committee shall have the authority to elect or remove the Department Adjutant by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of its total members.

## ARTICLE V - POSTS

**Section 1. New Posts.** Posts shall be formed as provided under the National Constitution and shall be governed on all matters of Department and National finance as set forth in the National Constitution. A minimum of fifteen (15) new members are required to start a Post in the Department of Texas. Such new members may include direct mail solicitation (DMS) members or Department Headquarters Post 345.

**a. District of New Post.** When a new post is formed, the physical address determines the district of the new post.

**b. Requires Coordination with District Commander.** No post with the Department of Texas shall be formed within a District without coordinating the District Commander.

**Section 2. Department and National Dues.** No Post shall have the right by resolution or other Act, to withhold or divert annual Department or National dues collected or funds collected from approved sources of the Department or National organizations.

**Section 3. Forwarding Funds.** All funds collected for the Department and the National Headquarters shall be forwarded to the Department within 30 days of receipt.

**Section 4. Election of Post Officers; Installation.** Officers shall be elected at a Post meeting held not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the Department Convention, and at the same time delegates and alternates to the Department Convention shall be elected; Post Officers shall be installed not later than the first regular Post meeting in August following their election.

**Section 5. Certification of Officers; Convention Delegates.** It shall be mandatory for Post Adjutants to certify to Department Headquarters the names of Post Officers elected/appointed for the ensuing year, no later than July 1<sup>st</sup> of that year, as prescribed by the Department Executive Committee, together with a list of delegates and alternates elected to the Department Convention.

**Section 6. Proxy Voting.** A member of an American Legion Post may authorize proxy voting for himself by another member of the same Post if provided for in the Post Constitution and By-Laws; said proxy shall be in writing and signed by the member issuing it. There will be no proxy voting within the Department of Texas above the Post level.

**Section 7. Post Named Only for Deceased.** No Post shall be named after any living person.

**Section 8. Post Constitution and By-Laws.**

**a. New Posts.** New Posts shall adopt within 90 days of receiving its temporary charter a Constitution and By-Laws not inconsistent with the Recommended Post Constitution and By-Laws approved by the Department Executive Committee and forward the adopted Constitution and By-Laws to the Department Judge Advocate, who will approve the Constitution and By-Laws or return it to the Post for the necessary corrections

**b. Requirement to Update.** At least every five years, each Post shall review its Post Constitution and By-Laws to insure it is not inconsistent with the Recommended Post Constitution and By-Laws. If changes are needed to be consistent with the Recommended Post Constitution and By-Laws, the Post must follow the Amendment Provisions of its Constitution and By-Laws. After the Amended Constitution and By-Laws has been approved by two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting, the amended Post Constitution and By-Laws must be sent to the Department Judge Advocate, who will approve the Constitution and By-Laws or return it to the post for the necessary corrections.

## ARTICLE VI - INTERMEDIATE BODIES

**Section 1. Recognize Intermediate Bodies.** Intermediate bodies and groups as provided by Article VIII, National Constitution, are recognized. Each shall adopt a Constitution and By-Laws subject to approval by the Department Judge Advocate.

**Section 2. No Uniformity Required for District Constitution & By-Laws.** District Constitution and By-Laws are not required to be uniform with other Districts. District Constitution and By-Laws must provide for the election of a District Commander and District Vice Commander and may provide for additional officers to be elected or appointed.

**Section 3. Recommended Constitution and By-Laws Govern.** In the absence of an adopted and approved Constitution and By-Laws by a Post or intermediate body, the Constitution and By-Laws approved by the Department Executive Committee as a recommended or model Constitution and By-Laws shall be used to govern the activities of that Post or intermediate body.

**Section 4. Use of American Legion Name.** The name of the Post, name of an intermediate body, or the name of the Department, or of the phrase, "The American Legion" shall not be used in connection with club, entity or business ventures, or in furtherance of any venture of a commercial nature, unless said project is owned in its entirety and controlled solely by said Post or Department of Texas, and then, only after the approval of the National Adjutant or his designated representative.

**Section 5. Limitation on Fundraising.** Posts shall not solicit money or donations by employing in part or fully, fundraising organizations or individuals or other entities unless the Post will receive 50% or more of the gross receipts.

**Section 6. Municipal Executive Committee.** Where there is an Executive Committee, all Posts in the municipality and suburb within its area must be members of and governed by the Executive Committee as to The American Legion policies. Any District or Districts that are included within a municipality or suburb may create an Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE VII - REAL ESTATE

**Section 1. Department Approval Required for Post to Sell.** No real estate owned by any Post or trustee of any Post will be sold, used as collateral for a loan, encumbered with a lien or otherwise disposed of without the approval of the Department Executive Committee or where time is of the essence the Department Commander, who shall report said action to the next Department Executive



Committee meeting. The Department Executive Committee shall adopt and publish procedures required for each Post to use in obtaining such approval.

**Section 2. Notify Department of Liens on Real Estate.** Any Post whose real estate becomes encumbered with a lien will notify the Department Adjutant within seven (7) days of receiving notice of the lien.

**Section 3. Notify Department of Acquisition of Real State.** Upon acquiring any interest in real estate, the Post will notify the Department of Texas.

**Section 4. Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Post Charter.** Upon revocation, cancellation or suspension of the charter of a Post in this Department, the Department Executive Committee is authorized, empowered, and directed by and through its duly authorized agent to take possession, custody and control of all real property of said Post: provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed as requiring this Department to take over or assume any financial responsibility as to such property.

**Section 5. Divisions and Districts May Not Acquire Real Estate.** Divisions and Districts of the Department of Texas may not acquire any interest in real estate.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - AUXILIARIES**

**Section 1. Recognize Auxiliary.** The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Texas, organized under the provisions of the National Constitution, is a recognized auxiliary organization of The American Legion, Department of Texas, a separate and distinct organization from The American Legion, Department of Texas.

**Section 2. Eligibility.** Eligibility for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary, shall be as that prescribed by the National Constitution and By-Laws.

**Section 3. Governance.** The Auxiliary shall be governed in this Department of The American Legion by such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the National Executive Committee and thereafter approved by this Department of The American Legion.

#### **ARTICLE IX - DISCIPLINE, REVIEW, APPELLATE COURT**

**Section 1. Discipline of Members.** The Department Executive Committee shall provide a Department of Texas Uniform Code of Procedure for Disciplinary Actions that Posts are required to follow in all actions to discipline members of The American Legion.

**Section 2. Discipline of Posts.** Posts, Districts and Divisions within the Department of Texas are required to use the Department of Texas Uniform Code of Procedures for Disciplinary Actions to initiate actions to discipline Posts within their districts or divisions.

**Section 3. Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Post Charter.** Upon revocation, cancellation or suspension of the charter of a Post in this Department, said Post shall immediately cease operations and upon revocation or cancellation shall turn over its charter to the Department Commander or

Department Executive Committee, and the Department Executive Committee is authorized, empowered and directed by and through its duly authorized agent to take possession, custody and control of all the records, property and assets of said Post; provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed as requiring this Department to take over or assume any financial responsibility as to such property. The Department Executive Committee may provide for the transfer of the members in said Post to other Posts of their choice, subject to the approval of such other Post.

## **ARTICLE X - DEPARTMENT CONVENTION**

**Section 1. Time and Place.** The Department Convention shall be held annually and shall be called at a date not less than thirty (30) days prior to the National Convention. The time shall be fixed by the Department Executive Committee not less than six (6) months in advance of the Convention. The Convention site shall be designated three years in advance of the Convention by the Department Executive Committee upon the recommendation of the Convention City Commission. In case of emergency the Department Executive Committee or the Department Commander, may change the date or the place of the Annual Convention.

**Section 2. Composition.** The Department Convention is composed:

**a. Department Officers.** Members of the Department Executive Committee and the Department Adjutant, none of whom except the Department Commander, shall be entitled to a vote unless duly elected as a delegate to the Convention by his Post.

**b. Past Department Commanders.** The Past Department Commanders, who served in that capacity while a member of the Department of Texas, who may be present and who are members in good standing of a recognized Post of the Department of Texas, shall have one additional vote to be counted with the votes of their Posts, but the additional vote of such Past Department Commander shall not be counted unless the Past Department Commander is registered and is present on the floor of the Convention at the time of vote.

**Section 3. Allocation of Delegates.** In the Department Convention each Post shall be entitled to two (2) delegates for the first fifteen (15) members. Posts with less than fifteen (15) members shall be entitled to only one (1) delegate. Each Post shall be entitled to one (1) additional delegate for each additional twenty-five (25) members or major fraction thereof, whose current dues have been received by Department Headquarters thirty (30) days prior to the date of said convention, and one (1) alternate for each delegate. The registered and certified delegates present at the Department Convention may cast the total votes authorized for the Post.

**Section 4. Post Credentials Form.** Every member elected or appointed to represent a Post as a delegate or alternate delegate to the Department Convention shall be listed on a certification form provided by the Department Adjutant, as the written notice of their appointment. The certification form will be signed by the Post Commander and Post Adjutant and be hand-carried by the Delegation Chair, who shall report to the Credentials Committee to register and certify the Post Delegates and Alternate Delegates.

**Section 5. Signature Verification of Delegation Chair.** Every delegate must be a member in good standing of the Post which they represent. The Chairman of each Post delegation must be identified

to the Credentials Committee by a comparison of their signature and the signature on their membership card.

**Section 6. Check Membership Cards.** All delegates registering at the Department Convention shall be required to present their current American Legion membership cards before being permitted to register.

**Section 7. Set Registration Fee.** The Department Executive Committee, at their fall meeting, shall set the registration fees which shall be collected from every member who registers at the Department Convention.

**Section 8. Order of Election.** The Department Commander shall be the last officer elected at the Department Convention.

**Section 9. Oath of Office.** Upon the election of the Department Officers at the Department Convention, the retiring Department Commander shall administer to each newly elected officer the following oath of office, to wit: **"I DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT I WILL SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THE STATE OF TEXAS, AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS, AND TRULY PERFORM THE DUTIES OF MY OFFICE, TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY, SO HELP ME GOD."** Thereupon said officers shall be deemed qualified and shall assume their respective duties in the manner prescribed by this Department Constitution and By-Laws. In the event of the absence from the convention of any newly elected officer, or whenever an occasion requires, the above oath of office may be administered by the Department Commander, the Department Vice Commander, or Department Adjutant.

**Section 10. Presiding Officer.** The Department Commander, if present, shall preside over the Department Convention, but may call upon one of the four Department Vice Commanders or a delegate to the chair. In the case of the absence of both the Department Commander and the Department Vice Commanders at the opening of the Convention the Department Executive Committee shall designate a presiding officer to act.

**Section 11. Failure to Elect Officer.** If the Department Convention fails to meet or to elect and install officers at the appointed time, those in office shall continue and exercise full authority until their successors are duly elected and installed.

**Section 12. Effect of Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws.** Amendments to the Department Constitution and By-Laws shall become operative immediately upon adoption. Immediately upon adjournment of the Department Convention, all Posts in the Department shall be notified by the Department Adjutant in appropriate manner of all changes in and to the Department Constitution and By-Laws, and it shall be mandatory that all Posts change their respective Constitutions and By-Laws to conform thereto.

**Section 13. Parliamentary Procedure.** Parliamentary procedure of the Department Convention and meetings of the Department Executive Committee shall be governed by "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised."

**Section 14. Duration of Convention.** The program of the Department Convention shall be limited to three (3) days, including the opening date.

**Section 15. Quorum.** The registered delegates from a majority of the certified Posts on the floor at the Department Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

**Section 16. Convention Rules.** The Department Executive Committee shall provide a Uniform Code of Procedure for the orderly organization and operation of Department Conventions with continuing power of revision and said Code shall be applicable at all Department Conventions unless it is amended, suspended, or repealed by a majority vote of the total authorized representation at a Department Convention.

**Section 17. Post with No Credentials List.** A delegate or delegation of a post with no credentials form, signed by the Post Commander and Post Adjutant, may complete a credentials form and submit it to the Credentials Committee to be considered for action of the Department Convention as a disputed or contested delegation.

**Section 18. Contested Delegation.** In the case of a disputed or contested delegation from a Post, the Credentials Committee will bring the case with a recommendation to the Department Convention for a decision. A majority vote of the Department Convention will decide the case.

## **ARTICLE XI - NATIONAL CONVENTION DELEGATES**

**Section 1. Election.** Delegates and Alternates to the National Convention shall be elected in the following manner: One Delegate and One Alternate shall be elected for each one thousand members of the District at the District Convention, excluding fractional parts of a thousand. One Delegate and One Alternate shall be elected by each Division Convention or Caucus. All additional Delegates and Alternates shall be elected by the Department Convention. A Nominating Committee, consisting of a chairman, appointed by the Department Commander, and the four (4) Department Vice Commanders, shall nominate such additional Delegates and Alternates to the National Convention; provided, however, this shall not exclude the nominating of Delegates-at-Large on the floor of the Convention.

**Section 2. Registration.** Upon election as a Delegate or an Alternate Delegate to the National Convention each Delegate and Alternate Delegate shall remit their registration fee to Department. By remittance of their registration fee, each Delegate and Alternate Delegate becomes obligated to stay in the host hotel for at least three (3) nights during the National Convention. Registration fees of the Delegates and Alternate Delegates to the National Convention shall then be remitted by Department. Guests wishing to be registered at the National Convention must remit a registration fee as determined by National to Department.

**Section 3. Alternates.** When a duly elected Delegate to the National Convention is not present, an Alternate Delegate from within the District or Division of the absentee shall be chosen by the Delegation Chairman. Only where there is no one present from a certain District or Division shall the Delegation Chairman be permitted to appoint a substitute from another District or Division.

## **ARTICLE XII - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN**

**Section 1. Election.** One National Executive Committeeman and one Alternate National Executive Committeeman shall be elected at Department Conventions held in even years, and shall serve for a period of two years, as provided under Article VII of the National Constitution. The Alternate National Executive Committeeman shall have all the powers of the National Executive Committeeman at the meetings at which the National Executive Committeeman is not present.

**Section 2. Vacancy.** In the event of a vacancy in the office of National Executive Committeeman or Alternate National Executive Committeeman, the Department Executive Committee at its next meeting shall elect an eligible person to serve for the unexpired term.

## **ARTICLE XIII - BY-LAWS**

**Section 1. By-Laws Not to Conflict with Constitution.** This organization shall be governed according to By-Laws adopted at Annual Department Conventions and said Department By-Laws shall not conflict with the provisions of this Department Constitution.

## **ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1. Procedure to Amend.** This Constitution may be amended at any Department Convention by a favorable vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the total delegate votes on the floor. It is further provided that the proposed amendments shall have been read at such convention at least four hours before being voted upon; and further provided that a record of the vote and the amendments shall be preserved. All proposed amendments to the Department Constitution must be presented to the Chairman of the Department Constitution and By-Laws Committee of the Convention by noon of the opening day of the Convention business session.

## **ARTICLE XV - SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE INTERNET**

**Section 1. Social Media Guidelines.** The Department Executive Committee shall promulgate Social Media Guidelines that shall set standards for use of social media at American Legion Posts, Districts, Divisions and the Department and shall be applicable to members of The American Legion, the Sons of The American Legion and The American Legion Riders. All such members are required to abide by those Social Media Guidelines.

**Section 2. Ownership of Domain Names and Social Media Accounts.** Applicants for social media accounts and registrants of domain names regarding The American Legion are not owners of those accounts or names but are only acting as agents of The American Legion Posts or the Department.

# BY-LAWS

## ARTICLE I - DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Section 1. Composition.** The Department Executive Committee shall consist of the Department Commander, the National Executive Committeeman, the Alternate National Executive Committeeman, the Immediate Past Department Commander, Four (4) Department Vice Commanders, Department Treasurer, Department Judge Advocate, Department Chaplain, Department Historian, Department Sergeant at Arms, one District Commander from each American Legion District in the State. The Department Judge Advocate, Department Chaplain and Department Treasurer shall not have a vote on the Department Executive Committee. All past National Commanders of the Department, while in good standing in their respective Posts, shall be members for life of the Department Executive Committee, without vote.

**Section 2. Past Department Commanders.** All Past Department Commanders who served in that capacity while a member of the Department of Texas, while in good standing in their respective Post within the Department, shall have a voice, without vote, at all Department Executive Committee Meetings, except the Immediate Past Department Commander who shall be a voting member of the Department Executive Committee in accordance with Article I Section 1.

## ARTICLE II - BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Section 1. Appointment and Terms.** A Board of Trustees is hereby created to consist of six members of The American Legion, Department of Texas, and the current Department Commander, with right to vote, to be known as "The Board of Trustees of The American Legion, Department of Texas." One member of said Board of Trustees shall be elected each year by the Department Executive Committee on nomination by the Department Commander to serve for a term of six years. No member of said Board shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself unless serving an unexpired term.

**Section 2. Election of Officers; Members with Voice Only.** At the first regular meeting of the Board of Trustees in each year, the Board shall elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman who shall serve for a term of one year and shall not be eligible to succeed themselves. The Department Treasurer, Chairman of Finance and Budget Committee, Department Judge Advocate, and Department Adjutant shall serve the Board in their respective capacities but shall not be granted privilege of vote on any question coming before the Board of Trustees. The meetings of the Board shall be held at such time and place as deemed necessary by the chairman or on call of three members thereof. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible to the Department of Texas.

**Section 3. Authority; No Compensation.** A majority shall have power to act and to exercise all the authority of the Board. The members of the Board shall serve without pay.

**Section 4. Vacancies.** If a member of the Board of Trustees fails to attend in person two consecutive meetings of the Board, without a valid cause, his/her place shall be declared vacant. Vacancies in the Board of Trustees shall be filled by election by the Department Executive Committee of The American Legion, Department of Texas, upon nomination by the Department Commander.

## **Section 5. Duties and Functions**

**a. Duties.** The duties of the Board of Trustees shall be to take charge of all trust funds and all trust properties, real, personal or mixed, the legal title to which is now vested, or may hereafter vest, in The American Legion, Department of Texas, or which may be offered to and accepted by The American Legion, Department of Texas. The disposal of Department property shall be made only upon a resolution authorizing same by the Board of Trustees and the execution of proper instrument of conveyance by the current Department Commander and attested to by the Department Adjutant.

**b. Investment Limitations.** Said Board shall have the power and it shall be its duty to invest and reinvest such funds, and to administer said properties according to their discretion as trustees; provided, however, that in no event shall such Board of Trustees invest any such property or funds as may come into their possession except in such income property as guardians are, at the time of such investment, authorized to invest the funds of their wards as provided by the laws of the State of Texas. Said Board may delegate to a responsible trust company the details of handling such of said funds as they may find and deem advisable. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to properly cover all property by adequate insurance in order that the Department shall be protected against fire, hail, tornado, liability and other losses. Coverage shall be only by such insurance companies as are authorized to do business in Texas by the State Board of Insurance.

**c. Use of Funds.** The income from all such properties and funds as said Board may hold for the benefit of The American Legion, Department of Texas, may be used by said Board for such purposes as may be recommended to and approved by the Department Executive Committee, and in no event shall any part of the corpus of such trust property or funds be expended for any other purpose whatsoever. If it shall be deemed advisable to sell any part of the corpus of such trust property, the entire proceeds of such sale shall immediately be re-invested and shall become a part of the corpus of such trust estate. The income, if any, from mineral leases, whether as bonus or royalty, may be considered as income of the trust estate by said Board.

**Section 6. Reimbursement of Expenses.** The authorized expenses incurred by the members of said Board in the discharge of their duties shall be allowed them and shall be paid from the income of said trust estate upon approval of such expense account by the Chairman of the Board.

**Section 7. Open Meetings; Minutes.** All meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be open to any Legionnaire and the minutes of all proceedings of all meetings shall be retained in the joint custody of the Department Adjutant and the Chairman of the Board and extracts thereof made available to all Post Adjutants and Department Officers and Committee Chairmen upon request.

## **ARTICLE III - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Department Commander**

**a. Chief Executive.** The Department Commander shall be the executive head of the Department.

**b. Principal Duties.** It shall be the duty of the Department Commander to see that the Constitution and By-Laws of the Department are strictly observed and that the Department Officers properly execute their duties. The Department Commander shall have full power to enforce the provisions of the Department Constitution and By-Laws and mandates of the Department Convention and

Department Executive Committee and shall make a semi-annual report to the Department Executive Committee of the Department Commander's activities and submit an annual report to the Department Convention.

**c. Preside Over Meetings.** The Department Commander shall be a member of the Department Executive Committee and shall notify all members of the Department Executive Committee of the time and place of all regular and called meetings at least five (5) days prior to such meetings and shall preside at the meetings of the Department Executive Committee.

**d. Authorize Travel Orders.** The Department Commander only shall cause to be issued by the Department Adjutant, or other competent authority, travel orders on which disbursements shall be made by the Department Treasurer. The Department Officers, District Commanders, and District Vice Commanders may be reimbursed for authorized expenses incurred while traveling within their territorial bounds, and to all meetings of the Department Executive Committee insofar as the approved budgets for travel shall permit for the Department and Districts.

**e. Appointment of Members to Foundation.** The Department Commander shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Texas American Legion Development Foundation and shall appoint, with the approval of the Department Executive Committee, three members of the nine (9) members / directors of the Foundation each year to serve for a 3-year term and shall fill any vacancies for the remainder of their unexpired term. The Commander shall also appoint the Department Treasurer, the Department Judge Advocate and the Chairman of the Americanism Commission to serve as ex-officio members with voice but no vote.

## **Section 2. Department Vice Commanders**

The four (4) Department Vice Commanders shall have the qualifications of Department Commander. They shall act as representative for the Department Commander as directed and perform duties as stated in their respective Division constitution and bylaws.

## **Section 3. Department Adjutant**

**a. Record Proceedings.** All proceedings of the Department Convention or any called Convention are to be drawn up in proper form and permanently recorded by the Department Adjutant.

**b. File Convention Documents.** All petitions, reports, appeals, returns, and other communications at the convention are to be delivered to the Department Adjutant and the Department Adjutant is to see that they are filed in an orderly manner and carefully preserved.

**c. Attest Documents.** No instrument of writing is authentic without the attestation of the Department Adjutant.

**d. Facilitate Communications with Committees.** The Department Adjutant is to distribute the documents referred to committees or other officers, according to the orders of the Department, and to notify such committees or other officers of their appointments to any duty.

**e. Supervise Printing.** The Department Adjutant shall supervise the printing of all documents, proceedings, and other matters ordered to be printed by the Executive Committee.



**f. Transmit Minutes.** After each Department Convention and Department Executive Committee meeting the Department Adjutant shall transmit to the Posts minutes of such meeting when a request for a copy of the minutes has been received in Department.

**g. Maintain Record of Post Officers.** The Department Adjutant shall keep an accurate list of all Posts and officers of the same and shall supply all Department officers and Committeemen with this list.

**h. Correspond with Posts.** The Department Adjutant shall correspond with Posts and members in the Department and perform such other duties incidental to the Department Adjutant's office as the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee may direct.

**i. Salary and Conditions of Employment.** The salary and conditions of employment of the Department Adjutant shall be fixed by the Department Executive Committee.

**j. Make Record of Meetings; Not Entitled to Vote.** The Department Adjutant shall attend all meetings of the Department Executive Committee and shall have the proceedings of the meetings recorded, and subsequently put into proper format. The Department Adjutant shall not be a member of the Department Executive Committee and is not entitled to a vote.

**k. Monitor Expense Accounts.** The Department Adjutant shall check the correctness and completeness of all expense accounts submitted to the Department for payment before they are turned over to the Department Commander for approval.

**l. Unable to Perform Duties.** In the event the Department Adjutant shall be unable to perform the duties of said office for any reason, the authority, duties and responsibilities of the Department Adjutant's office shall be assumed by a member of The American Legion appointed by the Department Commander, until the next Department Executive Committee meeting. The Department Executive Committee shall then elect a Department Adjutant according to Article IV, Section 10, of the Constitution.

**m. Distribute Resolutions.** The Department Adjutant shall report to all Posts in the Department the subjects of all Resolutions passed by Department Conventions. When this report includes Resolutions which contain distribution clauses, the Department Adjutant shall report compliance with the distribution clauses and shall cause a list of the actual recipients of copies of such resolutions to be filed with the Department file copies.

#### **Section 4. Department Treasurer**

**a. Record Receipts.** The Department Treasurer shall receive all funds due the Department from any source, giving the Department Treasurer's receipt thereof, and shall enter same in regular accounts with the purpose for which intended.

**b. Make Disbursements.** The Department Treasurer shall make disbursements only on legal orders from the Department Executive Committee.

**c. Make Reports.** The Department Treasurer shall make an annual report at the Department Convention, and such other reports as ordered by the Department Executive Committee.

## **Section 5. Department Judge Advocate**

**a. Qualifications.** The Judge Advocate of the Department of Texas must be a graduate of an accredited Law School, licensed to practice law by the State of Texas and the Department Judge Advocate must be a member of the State Bar and a member in good standing of The American Legion, Department of Texas.

**b. Duties.** It shall be the duty of the Department Judge Advocate to pass on the legality of all documents and all questions of a legal nature, and to render the Department Judge Advocate's opinion on same to the Department Commander. The Department Judge Advocate will review the Department Constitution and Bylaws on an annual basis with the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chairman.

## **Section 6. Department Historian**

The Department Historian shall keep an accurate history of the principal events pertaining to the Department, Posts, and members thereof, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to the Department Historian by the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee.

## **Section 7. Department Sergeant at Arms**

The Department Sergeant at Arms shall be present at all conventions, and it shall be the Department Sergeant at Arms duty to carry all messages from the Department Commander to any other officers or members, or vice versa, and to maintain order and decorum in the meeting as provided in the Department Constitution and By-Laws, and as directed by the Department Commander.

## **Section 8. Department Chaplain**

The Department Chaplain shall be charged with the spiritual welfare of the Department, attending meetings as required, which shall be opened and closed with non-sectarian prayer. The Department Chaplain shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned to the Department Chaplain by the Executive Committee or the Department Commander. Further, the Department Chaplain shall be available to carry on the "For God and Country" program, the annual Memorial Service, the "Chaplain's Workshops," the "Chaplain's Award" program, and to conduct non-sectarian religious services.

## **Section 9. Department Executive Committee**

**a. Administrative Powers.** Between Department Conventions, the administrative powers of the Department shall be vested in the Department Executive Committee.

**b. Time and Place of Meetings.** The Department Executive Committee shall hold its meetings at least three times between Conventions, and more often if said Committee shall deem it necessary. The place and dates of such meetings shall be determined by the Department Commander, except that the first meeting of the Department Executive Committee shall be held immediately after the adjournment of the Department Convention.

**c. Call of Meeting.** The Department Executive Committee may be called to meet by order of the Department Commander, or on call being duly drawn up and signed by five members of the Department Executive Committee, and upon receipt of such request the Commander shall immediately call a meeting of the Department Executive Committee. In the event the Department Commander refuses to call a meeting of the Department Executive Committee, after the Department

Commander has been requested by five members of the Department Executive Committee as outlined in Article III, Section 1c, of these Bylaws, the Department Adjutant shall call the meeting.

**d. Proxy Voting; Quorum.** No proxy except the District Vice Commander or a personal representative from the same District shall be permitted. A quorum for the transaction of business at any Department Executive Committee meeting shall consist of a majority of the voting members.

**e. Removal and Vacancies.**

**(1) Failure to Attend.** If a District Commander fails to attend in person two consecutive meetings of the Department Executive Committee without a valid cause, his/her place shall be declared vacant.

**(2) Filling Vacancies.** In the event of a vacancy, ineligibility, removal for cause, death, resignation or incapacity of a Department Official on the Department Executive Committee, the Department Commander shall appoint a qualified person to fill such vacancy for an interim period, subject to confirmation by the Department Executive Committee at its next meeting subject to the provisions in the Constitution (Article IV, Section 9).

**f. Authorize Employees.** The Department Executive Committee only shall authorize the employment of such personnel as they may deem necessary for the proper conducting of the affairs of the Department and shall allow them such salaries as may be necessary. All Department employees shall report to and be under the supervision of the Department Adjutant. The employment of such employees may be terminated by the Department Adjutant. All employees, if eligible, shall be members of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary or dependents thereof except the Department Adjutant, all Directors and Department Service Officers who shall be members of The American Legion. All persons who are permanently employed by the Department Adjutant shall have their employment confirmed by the Department Executive Committee at the first meeting of the fiscal year. The Department Executive Committee shall also authorize all expenses for the Department Employees.

**g. Institute Accounting System.** The Department Executive Committee and/or the Finance Committee shall have instituted such systems of accounting that a detailed account may be obtained at any or all times of any and all receipts and disbursements and shall authorize the necessary forms.

**h. Quarterly Financial Statements.** The Department Executive Committee shall cause to be issued a quarterly financial statement of the itemized financial accounts of the Department for the preceding quarter, and a copy of this statement shall be furnished to each officer and each member of the Department Executive Committee and, upon the request of any Post in the Department.

**i. Removal or Suspension.** Any member of the Department Executive Committee, a Department Committee or Department Commission may be removed or suspended for cause at a Department Executive Committee meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all voting members present; provided that the officer shall have been served with a written statement of the complaint at least fifteen days before such vote shall be taken and shall have an opportunity to be heard at the Department Executive Committee meeting. A District Commander, on the recommendation of a majority of the Post Commanders of his/her District may be suspended pending such a hearing by the Department Executive Committee.

**j. Budget**

**(1) Preparation of Proposed Budget.** The Department Commander with assistance of the Department Treasurer, Chairman and the members of the Finance and Budget Committee, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Department Adjutant shall prepare or cause to be prepared a proposed budget, a copy of which shall be delivered to each member of the Department Executive Committee, and each member of the Department's Finance and Budget Committee, and each member of the Board of Trustees not later than five (5) days prior to the first meeting of the Department Finance and Budget Committee.

**(2) Limitation on Budgeted Expenditures.** At the first meeting of the Department Finance and Budget Committee in each fiscal year, said Committee shall recommend budgets for the Department and the Board of Trustees, the net revenues of which shall not exceed the sum of the net revenues of the General Fund and the Total Receipts of the Trust Fund as reported on the General Fund and Trust Fund, Income and Expense Statements.

**(3) Limitations on Approved Budget.** At the fall meeting, The Department Executive Committee when adopting the budgets, shall not appropriate more than the sum of the net revenues of the General Fund and the Total Receipts of the Trust Fund as reported on the General Fund and Trust Fund, Income and Expense Statements.

**(4) Fiscal Year.** The Fiscal year for the Department of Texas shall commence on September 1 of each year and run through August 31 of the following year. The budget, when adopted by the Department Executive Committee, shall remain in full force and effect until changed at a future meeting of the Department Executive Committee, but still subject to Section 9 j (3).

**k. Open Meetings; Digest of Proceedings.** All meetings of the Department Executive Committee shall be open to any Legionnaire and the digest of all proceedings shall be furnished to any Legionnaire upon request. The Department Adjutant shall prepare the digest of proceedings within ninety (90) days.

**l. National Convention Expenses.** The Department Executive Committee at the meeting immediately following the adjournment of the Department Convention shall authorize a sum to cover travel expenses and additional expenses as may be approved by the Department Executive Committee for the incoming Department Commander, National Convention Delegation Chairman and the Department Adjutant, which funds shall be used to attend the National Convention as representatives of the Department of Texas. Each shall furnish Department Headquarters, within thirty days after the Convention, a written report of their activities and disposition of various Departmental matters of the convention. A copy of his/her report shall be furnished each Department officer or any Legionnaire upon request.

**m. Requests for Unbudgeted Appropriations.**

**(1) Initial Submission to Finance and Budget.** No appropriation shall be considered by the Department Executive Committee or Department Convention unless the appropriation has first been submitted to and passed upon by the Department Finance and Budget Committee. In the event a proposed appropriation is rejected by the Department Finance and Budget Committee, the proponent of such proposition may present the matter to the Department Executive Committee or to the Department Convention for final action. Any approval requires a 4/5 majority vote.

**(2) Non-Budgeted Emergency Expenditure.** All requests for expenditures of Department funds not budgeted for the purpose requested shall, before referral to the Department Executive Committee or Department Convention, be referred to the Department Finance and Budget Committee, which shall render an advisory opinion as to the availability of funds and the impact on the Department of the expenditure.

**(3) Limitations on Unbudgeted Expenditures Not Related to Real Estate.** Requests for non-budgeted expenditures not related to Real Estate shall not exceed annually 10% of the current budget net revenues of the General Fund and shall require the approval of the Finance and Budget Committee and four-fifths (4/5) majority of the members of the Department Executive Committee or Delegates to the Department Convention.

**(4) Limitation on Unbudgeted Expenditures Related to Real Estate.** Requests for non-budgeted expenditures relating to Real Estate shall require the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Finance and Budget Committee and four-fifths (4/5) majority of the members of the Department Executive Committee or Delegates to the Department Convention.

**n. Reimbursement of Expenses.** Authorized expenses of members of the Department Executive Committee incurred in the discharge of their official duties shall be allowed them when expense accounts have been properly submitted within the thirty (30) day period.

**o. Changes to Membership Goals.** No changes shall be made to the annual membership goals or awards after they have been approved by the Department Executive Committee, except to correct administrative error.

**p. Electronic Meetings.** If the Department Commander decides that a decision requiring the approval of the Department Executive Committee cannot be delayed until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Department Executive Committee, the Department Commander, in coordination with the Department Adjutant and the Department Judge Advocate, will prepare a resolution fully explaining the facts and background information that necessitates a decision that cannot be delayed and a "RESOLVED" clause that clearly sets forth the action that the Department Executive Committee is being asked to approve. The resolution shall be sent by e-mail to the Department Executive Committee members, who shall have 48 hours to "Reply All" with any debate. Voting members will vote by e-mail not sooner than 48 hours and no later than 72 hours after the initiating email. In order to approve the resolution, 2/3 of the voting members of the Department Executive Committee must vote in the affirmative.

**q. Virtual or Video Conferencing.** This section will apply to the Department Executive Committee, all commissions, committees and boards when utilizing virtual or video conferencing. (1) The Department Adjutant shall send by e-mail notice to every member at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to any virtual or video conference meeting: (i) the meeting(s) day and time; (ii) the meeting(s) connection URL and code(s); and, (iii) as an alternative and backup to the audio/video connection included within the e-mail notice, a phone number and access code(s) for member(s) who may need to participate in the meeting by telephone; (iv) the Department Adjutant shall schedule the meeting sign-on service availability for all members beginning at least 15 minutes before the meeting scheduled start time. Provided the original notice of the meeting was sent out as outlined in the Department By-Laws, Article III, Section 1C.

(2) Upon signing into the meeting all members shall be identified/authenticated and shall consistently maintain internet and/or audio access throughout the meeting. The meeting quorum number is determined based upon the Department Constitution and By-Law requirements. Thereafter, the continued presence of a quorum attendance is determined by the online list of members, unless a member demands a quorum count by video or audible roll call. Such a demand may only be made following any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a required quorum.

(3) Each member is responsible for his or her audio and internet connections as no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.

(4) Members are required to maintain the muting of their microphones by themselves, unless speaking, to avoid disruptions of the meeting. The Chair may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection to the meeting. The Chair's decision to disconnect or mute a member's connection shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the meeting minutes.

(5) To seek recognition by the Chair, a member shall raise his or her hand, or utilize the method within the virtual meeting service being used. A member intending to make a motion, or request, shall raise his or her hand, or utilize the method with the virtual meeting service being used, and shall thereafter wait a reasonable time for the Chair's instructions before attempting to interrupt the speaker by voice.

(6) A member intending to make a motion or offer an amendment not previously provided to all members, shall, before or after being recognized, transmit the motion, or amendment, in writing by email or other such means designated to the Department Adjutant for this purpose, along with the member's name. The use of e-mail or such other means designed for this purpose by the Chair shall be restricted to posting the text of intended motions or amendments.

(7) All business brought forth will be conducted by unanimous consent, unless a voting member objects, then a video / audio roll call vote will be conducted by the Department Adjutant of the voting members. The Chair will announce the voting result to include the number of members voting on each side of the question.

#### **ARTICLE IV - COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS**

**Section 1. Department Committees.** The Committees for the Department shall consist of the following:

**a. Finance and Budget Committee.** The Finance and Budget Committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be appointed by the Department Commander from the Department Executive Committee and who shall serve for one year, the other three members shall be appointed for a term of three years, one to be appointed each year by the Department Commander and all shall be subject to approval by the Department Executive Committee. Chairmen and Vice Chairman shall be designated by the Department Commander. Vacancies on this committee shall be filled by appointment by the Department Commander. The Department Commander, Department Treasurer, Department Judge Advocate and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees shall be ex-officio members of said Committee and the Department Adjutant shall be ex-officio secretary of said Committee. Said

Committee shall be charged with the duty of preparation of the yearly budget and handling funds under that budget and such other duties as shall be prescribed by the Department Executive Committee. Ex-officio members shall have voice but no vote.

**b. Long Range Planning Committee.** The Long Range Planning Committee is to develop and perpetuate a long term plan for the Department and shall submit recommendations for action to the appropriate Commissions or to the Department Executive Committee for its consideration. The Long Range Planning Committee shall consist of the current Department Commander and six other members who shall be appointed to 3-year terms. The Department Commander shall appoint two members each year. In the event of a vacancy, the Department Commander shall appoint a member to fill the unexpired term. The Committee will meet at least 3 times, or more, per year, at the discretion of the Department Commander. The four (4) Department Vice Commanders, Department Judge Advocate, Department Treasurer and the Department Adjutant shall serve as ex-officio members with voice but no vote. At the first Committee meeting of each year, the voting members of the Committee shall elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman, who shall be limited to serving no more than 2 consecutive years. The Department Adjutant shall serve as Secretary.

**c. Training Committee.** The Training Committee is to develop a comprehensive series of training programs that will satisfy the needs for appropriate instruction from the Post level through the Department level, incorporating the current courses of instruction, such as the Legion College, Commanders School, and the American Legion Basic Training Course, but expanded to satisfy more of the grassroots requirements. The Training Committee will also create the necessary curriculum and standards of instruction to develop a trained cadre that is proficient in both subject matter and teaching skills and can be employed at every level within the Department. Lastly, the Training committee will ensure that the Department is maximizing the latest and most appropriate training media, consistent with the needs and resources of the Department. The Training Committee shall consist of six members who shall be appointed to 3-year terms. The Department Commander shall appoint two members each year and designate the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Department Adjutant shall serve as an ex-officio member with voice but no vote. In the event of a vacancy, the Department Commander shall appoint a member to fill the unexpired term. The Committee will meet three (3) times or more annually, or at the discretion of the Department Commander. The Department Adjutant shall serve as Secretary."

**d. Convention Committees.** Department Convention Committees shall be Americanism, Membership, Organization and Post Activities, National Security, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Constitution and By-Laws, Legislative, Marketing, Media and Communications, Resolution Assignment and Credentials and Rules. Chairman and members of the Convention Committees shall consist of the Chairman of the respective Commission or subcommittee, one member from each District and one alternate who may serve in the absence of the principal, except that the Department Convention Resolutions Assignment Committee shall consist of a Chairman and the four (4) Department Vice Commanders. The Department Commander shall appoint the Chairman of the Department Convention Committees for Resolutions Assignment and Credentials and Rules.

**e. Special Committees.** The Department Commander shall have the authority to appoint such special committees to serve for a period not to exceed the Department Commander's respective term of office, and as may be authorized by the Department Convention and the Department Executive

Committee. A Department Commander may further appoint such other necessary Convention Committees not otherwise provided for.

**f. Committee Cooperation.** All Committees shall cooperate with other respective and like committees, with the Department Executive Committee and with National Commissions and Committees.

**Section 2. Commissions.** There shall be seven commissions of activity.

**a. Americanism**

- (1) Boys State
- (2) Baseball
- (3) Scouting
- (4) Children & Youth
- (5) Community Service and Education
- (6) Junior Shooting
- (7) Legion Riders
- (8) Oratorical Contest and School Awards
- (9) Sons of The American Legion
- (10) Youth Cadet Law Enforcement

**b. Membership, Organization and Post Activities**

- (1) Membership
- (2) Uniformed Organization
- (3) Constitution and By-Laws
- (4) Awards and Trophies

**c. National Security**

- (1) Military Affairs
- (2) Foreign Relations
- (3) Aerospace
- (4) Law and Order
- (5) Disaster Preparedness

**d. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation**

- (1) Hospitals and VAVS
- (2) Veterans Preference and Employment
- (3) Homeless Veterans
- (4) Women Veteran Outreach
- (5) Indigent Veteran
- (6) Unclaimed Remains

**e. Convention City**

**f. Legislative**

- (1) Legislative Council

**g. Marketing, Media and Communications**



### **Section 3. Special Rules**

**a. Composition of Commissions.** The Americanism, Membership, Organization and Post Activities, National Security, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Convention City, Legislative, Marketing, Media and Communications Commissions shall consist of four members, each representing a different Division, One of the four (4) Department Vice Commanders, designated by the Department Commander, and a chairman of each sub-committee, except that the four (4) Department Vice Commanders shall serve on the Membership, Organization and Post Activities Commission.

**b. Members of Commissions.** The members of each of the said Commissions shall be appointed from a different Division and shall serve a term of four years except that one will retire each year. The Chairman of each sub-division under each Commission shall be appointed annually, except that the Chairman of the Legislative Commission shall serve as Chairman of the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council shall consist of one member from each American Legion District in Texas.

**c. Appointment by Department Commander.** Appointments shall be by the Department Commander subject to approval by the Department Executive Committee. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of each Commission shall be designated annually by the Commander, except that the Department Commander shall appoint the Chairman of the Department Membership Sub-Committee.

**d. Election May Disqualify Commission or Committee Members.** In the event a Division member of a standing commission or committee is elected to the Department Executive Committee, he/she shall, if his/her term does not expire prior to assuming office, resign his/her position as Division member so that the incoming Department Commander may appoint a member to fill the unexpired term. They shall not be reappointed until their term on the Department Executive Committee has expired. Voting Members of the Department Executive Committee shall not be appointed to any commission or committee unless such appointment is specifically addressed within this Constitution or Bylaws.

**e. Duties of Commissions.** Duties of the Commissions consist of duties normally appertaining thereto and as may be assigned by the Department Convention, the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee.

**f. Removal of Members.** A member of any standing Committee or Commission may be removed for proper and adequate cause by the Department Commander, with the consent of the Department Executive Committee, and he/she shall be replaced for the unexpired term in the manner provided for the original appointment.

### **Section 4. Commissions and Committees Outlines**

#### **a. Americanism Commission:**

**(1) Functions.** To develop and maintain a spirit of 100% Americanism among Legionnaires and the citizens of the State of Texas. To put into effect the Americanism programs of The American Legion; to coordinate any overlapping of plans dealing with Americanism; and to develop an overall policy of Americanism. To oversee and report on programs that relates to Americanism and many youth programs.

**(2) Subcommittees.** The Americanism Commission will consist of the following sub-committees Chairman that will report to the commission: Boys State, Baseball, Scouting, Children & Youth,

Community Service and Education, Junior Shooting, Legion Riders, Oratorical Contest and School Awards, Sons of The American Legion, and Youth Cadet Law Enforcement.

**b. Membership, Organization and Post Activities Commission:**

**(1) Functions.** To recommend programs to the Department and Posts for the promotion of such activities as would stimulate interest in The American Legion and its programs in all communities. To promote an increase of membership in the Department by utilizing the Department Membership Plan. To review the Department Membership Plan on an annual basis and recommend changes. To develop and implement a Department Revitalization/Retention Teams within the Department and Districts.

**(2) Subcommittees.** The Membership, Organization and Post Activities Commission will consist of the following sub-committee Chairman that will report to the commission: Membership, Uniformed Organization, Constitution and By-Laws and Awards and Trophies

**c. National Security Commission:**

**(1) Functions.** Shall be responsible for all the National Security and Foreign Relations programs of The American Legion within the Department. To organize the members 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. To inform the members of any actions that could have an effect on the security of the community, state and nation.

**(2) Subcommittees.** The National Security Commission will consist of the following sub-committee Chairman that will report to the commission: Military Affairs, Foreign Relations, Aerospace, Law and Order and Disaster Preparedness.

**d. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission:**

**(1) Functions.** Shall be responsible for all the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Programs within the Department. To promote the programs of rehabilitation, employment and claims assistance for veterans and their dependents. To promote and coordinate volunteers at the Veterans Administration Hospitals to assist hospitalized veterans. To assist the Department Service Officers in the various locations and Regional Offices of the Veterans Administration to address issues and problems with veterans claim processing and rating. To encourage Posts and Districts to select qualified and able members to serve as Post and District Service Officers and to provide assistance to help them carry out their duties.

**(2) Subcommittees.** The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission will consist of the following sub-committee Chairman that will report to the commission: Hospitals and VAVS, Veterans Preference and Employment, Homeless Veterans, Women Veteran Outreach, Indigent Veteran and Unclaimed Remains.

**e. Convention City Commission:** To investigate the facilities of cities placing a bid for a Department Convention; to recommend to the Department Executive Committee the city best qualified to hold a Department Convention; and provide periodic inspections and reports on the pending convention sites.

**f. Legislative Commission:**

**(1) Functions.** To represent the Department of Texas with the State Legislature and to contact Congress on matters of interest to Texas veterans, as long as contact does not conflict with any National American Legion policy. To consider legislative matters and make recommendations to the Department Convention and/or Department Executive Committee and in general supervise the legislative program of the Department.

**(2) Legislative Council.** The Legislative Council is the grassroots effort of the Legislative Commission and will be supervised by the commission. Each District Commander shall make a recommendation to the Department Commander for the appointment of a member from their District to the Department Legislative Council.

**g. Marketing, Media and Communications Commission:** To work in concert with all Department Commissions and committees to build awareness of and support for the mission and programs of The American Legion in the State of Texas, and to promote same to active-duty military, Guard and Reserve components, military veterans and retirees, individual citizens, the general public, the United States Congress, the Texas State Legislature, media, national and local government agencies and corporate America. To educate and inform The American Legion Family of the mission and programs of The American Legion for the purpose of motivating them to promote and participate in the activities and aims of The American Legion. To develop and execute effective membership and fundraising campaigns. To provide direct oversight of all Department publications, Department Website, The Legion Times and any and all communications medias of the Department. And such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the Department Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE V - BOND OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

**Section 1. Amount of Bond.** All Department and Post officials handling American Legion money shall be bonded with bonding and surety company in an amount equal to double the average amount of money handled in a single year or such other amount as the Post Executive Committee deems adequate to protect the funds of the Post.

**Section 2. Approval of Bonds.** Bonds for Department officials shall be approved by the Department Judge Advocate and the Department Executive Committee.

**Section 3. Approval of Post Bonds by Post Judge Advocate.** Bonds for Post officials shall be approved by the Post Judge Advocate and the Post Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE VI - OPEN MEETING**

**Section 1. All Department Meetings Open to Members.** All meetings of the Department Executive Committee, the Department Board of Trustees, all committee, sub-committees, commissions and sub-commissions shall be open to all members of The American Legion. Legionnaires who are not members of the committees or commissions have no voice or vote.

**Section 2. All Post Meetings Open to Members.** All meetings of a Post shall be open to all members in good standing of the Post. Members of the Post who are not members of the committees have no voice or vote.

**Section 3. Procedure to Speak.** Attendees without voice or vote may only speak as provided by the presiding officer.

**Section 4. Certain Closed Meetings.** Notwithstanding Sections 1 and 2 above, the presiding officer can close a meeting to discuss personnel matters, real estate transactions and disciplinary matters. Any action must take place only when the closed session is ended and the meeting has been opened for the members.

#### **ARTICLE VII - TABLE OF CONTENTS, INDEX, PARAGRAPH NUMBERS AND PARAGRAPH TITLES**

**Section 1. Table of Contents and Index.** A Table of Contents and Index for this Department Constitution and By-Laws shall be prepared by the Department Judge Advocate and shall be updated each time it is amended.

**Section 2. Consistent Numbering and Descriptive Titles.** The Department Judge Advocate shall ensure that the paragraphs of this Department Constitution and By-Laws are numbered consistently and have descriptive titles.

**Section 3. Non-Substantive.** All actions of the Department Judge Advocate referred to in Section 1 and 2 must be non-substantive and must be approved by the Department Executive Committee.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1. Procedure.** These By-Laws may be amended at any Department Convention by favorable vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the total delegate votes on the floor. It is further provided that the proposed amendments shall have been read at such convention at least four hours before being voted upon and further provided that a record of the vote and the amendments shall be preserved. All proposed amendments to the Department By-Laws must be presented to the Chairman of the Department Constitution and By-Laws Committee of the Department Convention by noon of the opening day of the convention business session.

#### **ARTICLE IX - GENERAL ENACTING PROVISION**

**Section 1. Effective Immediately.** The provisions of the Department Constitution and By-Laws, and as hereafter may be amended, shall become effective immediately upon adoption. Conflicting provisions in preexisting Department Constitution and By-Laws are repealed and terminated by the adoption of this Department Constitution and By-Laws, unless otherwise specifically provided.

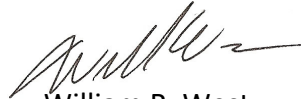
#### **ARTICLE X - MASCULINE AND FEMININE GENDERS**

**Section 1. No Distinction Between Male and Female.** Wherever in this Constitution and in the Bylaws reference is made to the words "him", "he", "his" and similar shall be deemed to include, as appropriate, "her", "she", "hers", and similar references, to the end that all distinction between the male and female sexes, for purposes of this Constitution and Bylaws, shall be deemed eliminated.

**OFFICIAL SECTION**

The preceding articles, sections, and pages constitute the official Constitution and By-Laws of The American Legion, Department of Texas, as amended by Department Convention in Austin, Texas, July 14, 15 and 16, 2023.

To certify which witness the official signature of the Department Adjutant and the seal of The American Legion, Department of Texas, this the 16th Day of July 2023.



William R. West  
State Adjutant

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