

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Constitution & Bylaws Purpose Statement

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

Committee Contact Information (constitution&bylaws@ALAforVeterans.org)

Our National Constitution & Bylaws Chairman Karen Lowe, Department of Indiana (kloweala29@hotmail.com) has listed her 2012-2013 guidelines:

A. Constitution & Bylaws

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

B. Standing Rules

- a. relate to the details of administration for the organization
- b. may be adopted by a majority vote
- c. may be amended or rescinded:
 - without prior notification by a two-thirds vote or a majority vote of the entire membership
 - with prior notification, by a majority vote.
- C. Parliamentary Authority – *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state statute, the constitution, the bylaws, or any special rules of order adopted by the organization.

D. Definitions

- a. Resolution: An elaborate, formally written motion. A resolution may contain a preamble that lists the reasons for adoption. Each reason is listed in a separate paragraph starting with the word "whereas." A resolution must have at least

- one "resolved" clause that specifies the action or position being proposed.
- b. Amendment: Proposes a change to the Constitution, Bylaws, Special Rules of Order, or Standing Rules. Also used to modify a motion under consideration.

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

1. National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules (also available at www.ALAforVeterans.org)
 2. Policies and Procedures manual
 3. Unit Handbook
 4. Parliamentary Procedure
 5. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised
- See program page on www.ALAforVeterans.org for additional resources.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2016-2017

Has your unit updated your Constitution and Bylaws recently?

The American Legion Auxiliary is _____ years old. This is a great time to update your Unit Constitution.

Has your unit made any changes within your unit like the name of the organization, object, membership, officers, meetings, amount of dues, executive board, committees, parliamentarian authority or amendment to prescribe procedure change. If there are no changes in this area, it may not need updating.

Read through it and contact me, letting me know that there are no changes. That counts as updating it. Are your Constitution & Bylaws readable. They do not necessarily need to be typed, but they should be in good readable condition.

Also, if your unit is in the process of updating your Constitution, please let me know that as well, or if you have any questions or if you need help, please let me know. Once you have completed a new Constitution for your unit, don't forget to mail a copy to Myrna and to me.

I would love to have every Unit contact me this year and have 100% of all Unit Constitutions updated.

Thank you,

Sandra Petermann,
ND Dept. Constitution & Bylaws Chairman