



AMERICAN LEGION
POST _____, _____ TENNESSEE
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



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

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be _____, _____ (post name and number), The American Legion, Department of Tennessee.

ARTICLE II - OBJECTS

Section 1. The objectives and purposes of this Post shall be to promote the principles and policies as set forth in the foregoing preamble, and the National and Departmental Constitutions of The American Legion.

ARTICLE III -NATURE

Section 1. This Post is a civilian organization, and membership therein does not affect or increase liability for military or police service.

Section 2. This organization 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.

Section 3. Rank does not exist in The American Legion; no member shall be addressed by his military or naval title in any meeting of this Post.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility to membership in this Post shall be as prescribed by the National Constitution of The American Legion.

Section. 2. Application for membership shall be made in writing under such regulations as may from time to time be prescribed by the Post Executive Committee.

Section 3. All applications for membership shall be acted upon at the next Post meeting following the making of such application, and shall at such meeting, be accepted, rejected, or referred for further investigation and consideration. If a majority of the members cast their vote against the acceptance of said application, then such application shall be recorded as rejected.

Section 4. Any member of this Post may be expelled for cause by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee after charges are preferred under oath in writing, and a fair trial had upon the same.

Section 5. A member who has been expelled or suspended from this Post for any cause may be reinstated to membership by a two-thirds vote of the membership present in Post meeting, and the payment of current dues for the year in which the reinstatement occurs.

Section 6. No person who has been expelled by a Post shall be admitted to membership in this Post, without the consent of the expelling Post, except that where such consent has been asked for and denied by such Post, may then appeal to the state Executive Committee of the Department of the expelling Post for permission to apply for membership in this Post, and shall be ineligible for membership until such permission is granted.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section 1. The administrative affairs of this Post of The American Legion shall, except as may be otherwise provided by the Bylaws, be under the supervision of an Executive Committee which shall consist of ___ members in addition to the officers of the Post. The term of office of members of the Executive Committee shall be for one year. This Post, by its Bylaws, may provide for such other standing committees as the business of the organization may require.

Section 2. The officers of this Post shall be a commander**, an adjutant**, post service officer**, a vice-commander, a finance officer, a Post historian, a Post

chaplain, and a sergeant-at-arms, and such other officers as may be deemed necessary by this organization, who shall be nominated from the floor at the meeting preceding the annual election.

Section 3. All officers and executive committee members shall be elected annually, and they shall hold office until their successors are duly installed or as otherwise provided. Any officer or executive committee member may be removed for inefficiency by the Executive Committee, a two-thirds vote of said committee being necessary to affect such removal. If the Post Commander is removed for inefficiency, resignation, or no longer able to serve due to health or death; the first vice commander will assume the position of Commander until the next scheduled election; furthermore, the second vice will assume the first vice's duties. Other positions will remain vacant until the next election.

Section 4. Every member of this Post in good standing shall be eligible to hold office in this Post.

Section 5. The duties of officers and the executive committee shall be those usually appertaining to such officers or committee and as further provided in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI - FINANCE

Section 1. The revenue of this Post shall be derived from membership or initiation fees, from annual membership dues and from such other sources as may be approved by the Post Executive Committee.

Section 2. The amount of such membership or initiation fees and the amount of such annual Post dues shall be fixed and determined by this Post.

Section 3. The Post shall pay to Departmental headquarters the National and Departmental annual membership dues for every member of the Post.

ARTICLE VII - CHARTER MEMBERS

Section 1. Members who joined this Post prior to _____ (or members who joined this Post prior to the issuance of charter) shall be known as charter members.

ARTICLE VIII - AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Section 1. This Post recognizes an auxiliary organization to be known as the Auxiliary Unit of (post name and number), The American Legion.

Section 2. Membership in the Auxiliary shall be as prescribed by the National Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution is adopted subject to the provisions of the National Constitution of The American Legion and of the Department Constitution of the Department of Tennessee, The American Legion. Any amendment to said National Constitution or Department Constitution which is in conflict with any provisions hereof shall be regarded as automatically repealing or modifying the provisions of this Constitution to the extent of such conflict.

Section 2. This Constitution may be amended at any regular Post meeting by vote of two-thirds of the members of said Post attending such regular meeting, providing the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing and read at the next preceding regular meeting of said Post, and providing, further, written notice shall have been given to all members at least _____ days in advance of the date when such amendment is to be voted upon, notifying said members that at such meeting a proposal to amend the Constitution is to be voted upon.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Section 1. The Post existing under these Bylaws is to be known as (post name and number), The American Legion, Department of Tennessee.

Section 2. The objectives of this Post are as set forth in the Constitution.

ARTICLE II - MANAGEMENT

Section 1. The government and management of the Post is entrusted to an Executive Committee of _ members, to be known as the “Executive Committee.”

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall consist of _____ members in addition to the officers of the Post and together with the other officers of this Post shall be elected annually on _____ and take office at the meeting next following that of the election. All elections of officers and executive committee members shall be by ballot and the candidate or candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to the respective office or offices for which they are candidates.

Section 3. All vacancies existing in the Executive Committee, or in any office of the Post from any cause other than the expiration of the term, shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the committee, and a person so appointed shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member of the committee or officer who succeeded. A vacancy shall exist when a member or officer is absent from the Post for a continuous period considered detrimental to the interest of the Post by the Post Executive Committee.

ARTICLE III - POST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Post Executive Committee shall meet for organization and such other business as may come before it at the call of the Post commander within _____ days after the installation of the new officers. Thereafter the Post Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the commander or at least every month and as often as said commander may deem necessary. The commander shall call a meeting of the Post Executive Committee upon the joint written request of three or more members of said Post Executive Committee, _____ members of the committee shall constitute a quorum thereof.

Section 2. The Post Executive Committee shall hire such employees as may be necessary; shall authorize and approve all expenditures; shall require adequate criminal insurance or a surety bond on all persons having the custody of Post funds; shall hear the reports of Post committee chairs; and shall have charge of and be responsible for the management of the affairs of this Post.

ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Duties of Post Commander. It shall be the duty of the Post Commander to preside at all meetings of the Post and to have general supervision over the business and affairs of the Post, and such officer shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Post. The Post Commander shall approve all orders directing the disbursement of funds and shall make an annual report covering the business of the Post for the year, and recommendations for the ensuing year, which shall be read at the annual meeting and a copy thereof immediately forwarded to the Department Adjutant. The Post Commander shall perform such other duties as directed by the Post.

Section 2. Duties of the First Vice-Commander. The First Vice-Commander shall assume and discharge the duties of the office of Post Commander in the absence or disability of, or when called upon by the Post Commander.

Section 3. The Second Vice-Commander is responsible for building an atmosphere in which Legionnaires have fun while accomplishing the mission of their American Legion post. The Post Commander depends on the Second Vice-Commander to help run operations to spice up meetings and attract members to the post. The social calendar should be filled months in advance with activities designed to engage members. One of the Second Vice-commander's initial duties should be to contact other veterans and civic groups to verify each patriotic holiday, and observance receives the respect it deserves. The Second Vice-Commander should be looking for ways to involve members in post activities, operations, and programs to assist the First Vice-Commander by providing improved member retention.

Section 4. Duties of Post Adjutant. The Post Adjutant shall have charge of and keep a full and correct record of all proceedings of all meetings, keep such records as the Department and National Organizations may require, render reports of membership annually or when called upon at a meeting, and under direction of the Post Commander manage all correspondence of the Post.

Section 5. Post Service Officer. The value of a Post Service Officer increases with length of service. As the Service Officer's reputation grows, so will the value of the

organization in the veteran community. The job requires a competent, resolute, and organized person, preferably one is readily available to assist. The Post Service Officer is responsible for bringing awareness to all veterans and their dependents of the rights and benefits granted by law. The Post Service Officer also must know how to access and utilize the expert services available through The American Legion, state and federal government agencies, and local community agencies. The job requires timely submission of information to full-time professionals, so veterans and their dependents are represented. The Post Service Officer's report should be a standard part of every meeting.

Section 6. Duties of the Finance Officer/Treasurer. The Finance Officer/Treasurer of the Post shall have charge of all finances and see that they are safely deposited in a local bank or banks and shall report once a month to the Post Executive Committee the condition of the finances of the Post, with such recommendations as may deem expedient or necessary for raising funds with which to carry on the activities of the Post. The Finance Officer/Treasurer shall sign all checks disbursing the monies of the Post. All persons having custody of Post funds, the Post Executive Committee will secure adequate crime insurance or a surety bond to cover double the average amount of money handled annually.

Section 7. Duties of Post Historian. The Post Historian shall be charged with the individual records and incidents of the Post and Post members and shall perform such other duties as may properly pertain to the office as may be determined by the Post membership or the Post Executive Committee.

Section 8. Duties of Post Chaplain. The Post Chaplain shall be charged with the spiritual welfare of the Post members and will offer divine but nonsectarian service in the event of dedications, funerals, public functions, etc., adhere to such ceremonial rituals as are recommended by the National or Department Headquarters from time to time.

Section 9. Duties of Sergeant-at-Arms. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall preserve order at meetings and shall perform such other duties as may be from time to time assigned by the Post Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V - DELEGATES

Section 1. Delegates and Alternates to a Department convention shall be elected by ballot by the Post at a regular meeting of the Post to be held at least 20 days prior to the date of such convention.

ARTICLE VI – APPOINTMENTS

(not every post will have all the following committees)

Section 1. The Post Commander, immediately upon taking office each year, shall appoint the following standing committees: Americanism, Children and Youth, Economic, Finance, House, and Entertainment, Legislative, Membership, Public Relations, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, and Visiting or Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Committee and National Security. Such standing committees shall consist of such members, and the chair thereof, as shall be designated by the Post Commander. Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Riders are Post programs and shall elect their own officers as outlined in respective program Department/Detachment Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. Americanism Committee. The Americanism Committee shall be charged with the inspiration of patriotism and good citizenship by arrangements for proper observance of patriotic occasions; encouragement of patriotic and civic phases of instruction in schools; Americanization of aliens; combating anti-American propaganda by education of the general public in American ideals through public forums, etc., and activities for community and civic betterment.

Section 3. Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall be charged with the administration of the financial policy, preparation of budget recommendations and supervision of receiving, disbursing, and accounting of all Post funds.

Section 4. Children and Youth Committee. Shall be charged with aid and service to children of veterans, cooperating with other established agencies in the community, laboring for the betterment of child conditions and in coordinating services and agencies in the community for the above purposes. To function as intermediary for the needy child of a veteran in obtaining the fulfillment of the Legion's pledge that "no child of a war veteran shall be in need of the necessities of life" and "a square deal for every child."

Section 5. House and Entertainment Committee. The House and Entertainment quarters promotion of club advantages and arrangement for social activities.

Section 6. Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee needs to have a knowledge of what is going on in Congress—what we favor or oppose and should be ready to initiate action in support of our position when requested by the national or Department organization.

Section 7. Membership Committee. The Membership Committee shall have charge of all matters pertaining to the membership of the Post, including the procuring of new members, reinstatements, and eligibility of members.

Section 8. Public Relations Committee. The Public Relations Committee shall be charged with the promotion of public support of the Legion's programs by the establishment of proper contact with The American Legion Magazine, Department, and national Legion news service and by local publicity of Post programs and activities.

Section 9. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee. The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation committee shall supervise all matters pertaining to service to veterans in the prosecution of all just claims against the United States or state government, employment, relief, etc.

Section 10. Visiting or VAVS Committee. This committee is charged with visiting and comforting members and their families when sick or bereaved, and with visiting ex-service personnel in hospitals.

Section 11. National Security Committee. The Security Committee shall work with and coordinate Legion efforts with the local Civil Defense Council on matters pertaining to national, civilian, and home defenses. It shall assist the armed forces of the United States in recruiting efforts and in every way be active in community activities for the defense of the nation and the security of the American home.

ARTICLE VII - RESOLUTIONS

Section 1. All resolutions of state or national scope presented to this Post by a member or reported to this Post by a committee shall merely embody the opinion of this Post on the subject and copy of same shall be forwarded to the Department headquarters for approval before any publicity is given or action other than mere passage by the Post is taken.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

Section 1. The regular meeting of the Post shall be held at the club rooms on _____, at which may be transacted such business as may properly be brought up for action; such meetings may be converted into entertainment meetings, as may be deemed advisable by the Post officers.

Section 2. The Post Commander or a majority of the Post Executive Committee shall have power to call a special meeting of the Post at any time.

Section 3. Upon the written request of _____ members, the committee shall call a special meeting of the Post.

Section 4. _____ members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX - NOTICES

Section 1. Every member shall furnish the Post Adjutant with contact information and an address for mailing.

Section 2. The Post Adjutant shall cause notice of the annual election to be given at least two weeks prior thereto.

ARTICLE X - RULES OF ORDER

Section 1. All proceedings of this Post shall be conducted under and pursuant to Roberts' Rules of Order, except as herein otherwise provided.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular Post meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members of said Post attending such regular meeting; Provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing and read at the next preceding regular meeting of said Post; and, provided, further, that written notice shall have been given to all members at least _____ days in advance of the date when such amendment is to be voted upon, notifying said members that at such meeting a proposal to amend the Bylaws is to be voted upon.