THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF CONNECTICUT

Organization and Purpose of The Department Commissions and Committees Guide

REVISED COPY
Approved by D.E.C.
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Commission and Committee chairmen and members should familiarize themselves with the programs and functions that fall under each Commission and Committee described in this organization and purposes document.

Organization and Purposes for Commissions and Committees

1) With exception to the SSMF, all appointments shall be made by the Department Commander and approved by the Department Executive Committee at the first meeting following the Department Convention and no later than the fall meeting. Vacancies occurring during the term of office shall be appointed by the Department Commander and approved by the Department Executive Committee.

2) No one individual shall sit on more than three (3) standing Committees/Commissions combined at any time.

3) Unless stated otherwise, Commission members will serve for one year between Department Conventions. The Chairman does not have to be a member of the respective Commission. This will apply to Commissions only.

4) Unless stated otherwise, Committee members will serve for one year between Department Conventions. The Commander from within the membership of the Committee shall appoint committee Chairmen (i.e. Program Directors).

5) Non-American Legion family members may serve as consultants on Commissions and Committees with no vote.

6) Written reports from all standing Commissions and committees are mandatory at all Department Executive Committee meetings, Mid-Winter Conference and Department Convention. Committee Chairman may present a report upon the request of their respective Commission Chairman and the approval of the Department Commander. All Commission Chairman are required to submit their written reports to the Adjutant's office 10 days prior to DEC meeting. Written Reports are required 30 days prior to each Department Convention and Mid-Winter Conference.

7) The Department Commander, Senior Vice-Commander, Judge Advocate and Immediate Past Department Commander shall be ex-officio members of all Standing Commissions and Committees.

8) The Immediate Past Department Commander is eligible to serve as a regular member on Commissions and Committees.

9) The Department Commander with the approval of the Department Executive Committee may remove any member from a commission or committee who has absented themselves from attendance at three consecutive meetings of the respective commission or committee.

10) All standing Commissions and Committees will hold a meeting within sixty (60) days after the Department Convention to formulate plans for the ensuing year and provide an opportunity for new and returning members and program directors to become familiar with their duties and responsibilities.

11) District appointed chairperson may be considered to serve on corresponding Department Commissions or Committees. Districts must make their committee appointments prior to Department convention and submit to Department Adjutant.

12) Committees or Commissions may transact business by mail or email vote. If an email vote is implemented, each response must be forwarded to all members of the Committee or Commission. If standard mail is used, the voting shall be considered closed at the end of ten (10) business days provided a majority of members of the committee or commission have returned their votes to the chairperson by that time, or it shall be considered closed at any time prior thereto if all members have returned their votes. In the event one-third (1/3) of the committee or commission members objects in writing, the matter shall not be decided and will be considered as the first order of business at the next regular meeting or special meeting and the chairman shall notify the committee or commission of the action taken.

13) No elected Department Officer should be a member of any standing Commission or Committee, except the Department Chaplain, Department Historian, National Executive Committeeman and Alternate National Executive Committeeman, and as otherwise noted. Exceptions to this may be necessary to maintain continuity and subject matter expertise and should be approved on a limited basis.

14) Sons of The American Legion may be appointed to any Committee or Commission with voice and voting rights.

Americanism Commission

Organization: The Americanism Commission shall consist of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a minimum of five (5) members selected from the membership at large. Additional members of the Commission will include the Directors of the Committees assigned to the Americanism Commission for supervision and coordination: Children and Youth, Awards, Baseball, Oratorical, Scouting, Junior Shooting and State Police Youth Week Committees.

Purpose: To supervise and coordinate committee activity, to promote an understanding and appreciation of American government along with the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship. To promote youth activities, community service, instruction of prospective citizens and legal immigrants, education and educational facilities, and protection of the United States flag from physical desecration.

Such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the Department Convention or the Department Executive Committee.

Children and Youth Committee

Organization: The Children and Youth Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to five (5) other members selected at large.

Purpose: To assure care and protection for the children of Veterans. Improve conditions for all children and youth with concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home. Where possible, prevent social and physical ills of children and youth. To maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs.

Awards Committee

Organization: The Awards Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to five (5) other members selected at large. The Department Adjutant shall serve as an ex-officio member.

Purpose: To educate and make aware to American Legions posts throughout the state of the many awards that are available to give recognition to those individuals, groups, organizations or dignitaries that have either given or shown support of The American Legion.

American Legion Baseball Committee

Organization: The Baseball Committee shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members appointed at large. Sons of The American Legion members are eligible to serve on the Baseball Committee.

Purpose: To promote our national past time, encourage posts to sponsor a Legion Baseball program, work with High School Baseball programs both public and private to encourage eligible youth to join our program. Teach such fundamentals as teamwork, good sportsmanship, physical fitness and promoting citizenship in their local communities.

Oratorical Committee

Organization: The Oratorical Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to five (5) other members selected at large.

Purpose: Promote and develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States on the part of high school students. Develop leadership qualities, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, the rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Scouting Committee

Organization: The Scouting Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to five (5) other members selected at large. Sons of The American Legion members are eligible to serve on the Baseball Committee.

Purpose: To encourage posts to sponsor local boy scout programs as a way to get involved with their local communities to bring fun, adventure and leadership skills to young people and to provide effective character building, citizenship training, and personal fitness opportunities for youth. Also promote specialized phases of the Scouting program that have been developed for boys and girls on several age levels that teach life skills, habits, values, and attitudes consistent with the interests of their church and community. Promote scouting awards such as the Square Knot Award and The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year.

Junior Shooting Committee

Organization: The Junior Shooting Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to five (5) other members selected at large.

Purpose: Promote The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program that teaches youth rifle safety and procedures and lets youth participate in an Olympic skill sport while fostering healthy competition. This program embodies strong American values and forms a grassroots force dedicated to love of country and commitment to veterans, their families, their communities and young people.

State Police Youth Week Committee

Organization: The State Police Youth Week Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to five (5) other members selected at large.

Purpose: To encourage posts to sponsor high school Students interested in Law Enforcement to attend our State Police Youth Week program (between their Junior & Senior year). Promote the program goal to provide first-hand experiences and insight into the operations of law enforcement agencies and promote the curriculum, which includes; physical fitness training coupled with classroom instruction and hands-on training. Topics of instruction may include criminal law, constitutional law, patrol procedures, criminal investigation, evidence gathering techniques, arrest techniques, fingerprinting, testifying in court, public speaking, leadership skills, vehicle operating procedures, report writing, interviewing and use of control and firearms training.

American Legion Boys State Commission

Organization: The Boys State Commission shall consist of a Chairman and a Vice Chairman who will be two of the Commission members with a maximum of Nine (9) members selected from the membership at large; however, every attempt should be made to have qualified representation from each of the seven (7) Districts. Members shall serve staggered terms of three (3) years. The Commission members will designate a Program Director who may or may not be a Commission member.

Purpose: Promote this unique summertime educational program for the rising high school seniors that focuses on participation and personal experience in a model state, complete with governmental bodies and elected public officials. Explain how it is designed to mirror the structure and operation of its respective state government, while providing training in practical citizenship, leadership and character development through a non-partisan perspective. Explain that The American Legion believes our U.S. government can survive only with an educated populace. By teaching youth to understand and appreciate our democratic republic, America can remain strong and ensure our freedom for future generations.

Finance Commission

Organization: The Finance Commission shall consist of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a minimum of five (5) members selected from the membership at large.

Purpose: The Finance Commission shall exercise general supervision over the invested funds of the Department. It shall from time to time make recommendations to the Department Executive Committee as to any specific reinvestments it may deem desirable and as to specific investment of any unallocated funds of the Department if the Department Treasurer shall report the same as available for that purpose. Upon receiving the approval of the Executive Committee as to such investments or reinvestments, the Finance Commission shall be empowered to purchase, sell or exchange securities, so approved by the Department Executive Committee. The signing of such securities, or other papers that are deemed necessary for their transfer, shall be vested in the Treasurer of The American Legion Department of Connecticut Inc, on authorization of the Department Finance Commission. The Finance Commission shall submit a report to each regular meeting of the Department Executive Committee of any transaction entered into since the previous meeting.

Internal Affairs Commission

Organization: The Internal Affairs Commission shall consist of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a minimum of five (5) members selected from the membership at large; however, every attempt should be made to have qualified representation from each of the seven (7) Districts.

Purpose: To formulate and recommend policies and to oversee the implementation of adopted policies relating to activities conducted for organizational purposes, including but not limited to such policies as do not properly come within the scope of any other Department Commission. To review and offer guidance to the necessary administrative operations of the Department Headquarters.

Assigned as the investigative body of the Department, the Internal Affairs Commission will in coordination with the Department Adjutant and Department Judge Advocate, investigate such complaints that could have legal implications, constitution and by-law violations, or such instances where the reputation of The American Legion could be harmed. The Internal Affairs Commission will not typically investigate individual complaints at the Post level unless it can be proven that their constitutional rights were violated by the Post, which would require a ruling by the Department.

Assigned to the Internal Affairs Commission for supervision and coordination are the: Constitution and By-Laws Committee, Convention Committee, Personnel Committee, Legislative Committee, Sons of The American Legion, the National Security Committee and American Legion Riders.

Convention Committee

Organization: The Convention Committee will consist of Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and a minimum of five (5) members selected at large, shall be the Department Adjutant, Department Treasurer and Department Judge Advocate, selected at large.

Purpose: To negotiate contracts with prospective sites to host our Department Convention and Mid-Winter Conference and to maintain communications with said site to ensure proper accommodations are available when needed. To recruit dignitaries, business owners, and other individuals that are of particular interest to our organization to speak and provide information that would be beneficial to our Veterans.

Legislative Committee

Organization: The Legislative Committee will consist of a minimum of five (5) members selected at large with the Chairman (Director) appointed from the members. The Department Adjutant, Department Treasurer, Department Judge Advocate, National Executive Committeeman and one (1) consultant will be members.

Purpose: To assist other Commissions and Committees in representing The American Legion on all legislative matters in which The American Legion is officially interested. To assist, through its reports to the Department Executive Committee and its liaison with other Commissions, in the formulation of appropriate legislative actions to be officially endorsed by resolution adopted by The American Legion.
Such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the Department Convention or the Department Executive Committee.

Personnel Committee

Organization: The Personnel Committee shall consist of a minimum of six (6) members selected at large; provided however that the Chairman shall not be appointed from among the members and the Vice Chairman shall be appointed from among the members of the Committee. For appointments to this Committee, priority consideration should be given to Legionnaires who are engaged in or have had experience in personnel relations, business administration or other similar responsibilities. The Department Adjutant shall be an ex-officio member.

Purpose: The Personnel Committee shall, after coordination with the Department Committee or Commission concerned, prepare for the approval of the Department Executive Committee, new or revised work rules, personnel regulations, employment policies and procedures, and other related matters effecting employees of the Department. After approval by the Department Executive Committee, the Personnel Committee shall implement the approved directives. The Department Adjutant along with the Personnel Committee shall be the single hiring authority for all Department employees, unless otherwise specifically provided for shall be charged with continuing responsibilities for such personnel matters.

Sons of The American Legion

Organization: An American Legion Liaison Director to the Sons of The American Legion to serve for a term of three (3) years.

Purpose: To interact with the Sons of The American Legion, promote membership, address issues, intercede when needed, make recommendations when required and report to the Department Executive Committee.

American Legion Riders

Organization: An American Legion Liaison Director to the American Legion Riders to serve for a term of three (3) years.

Purpose: To establish a working relationship with the American Legion Riders director, promote membership, address issues, intercede when needed, make recommendations when asked and report to the Department Executive Committee. Offer assistance to the Legion Riders Director for the purposes of providing a report at the Department Convention.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee

Organization: The Constitution and By-Law Committee shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members. At least three (3) shall be Past Department Commanders and two (2) selected from at large. The Director shall be a Past Department Commander. The Department Adjutant, Department Treasurer and Department Judge Advocate shall serve as consultants.

Purpose: To study and make proper recommendations concerning all matters pertaining to the Department of Connecticut Constitution and Bylaws.
Such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the Department Convention or the Department Executive Committee.

Membership, Leadership and Learning Commission

Organization: The Membership Electronic Media, Education & Training Commission shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members at large; provided however that the Chairman shall not be appointed from among the members. The Membership Chairman shall serve a three (3) year term. The Department Senior Vice-Commander will be the Co-Chairman and serve a one (1) year term. All other members along with Legion College graduates, Women's Veteran Outreach Chair, and District Senior Vice-Commanders shall serve a one (1) year term. Sub Committees chairs shall be appointed by the Commission Chairman. Any standing Committees assigned to this Commission will be appointed by the Department Commander.

Purpose: To formulate and recommend policies. To oversee the implementation of policies relating to the recruitment of new members, transfers from Headquarters Post to local posts, attract and retain members and the development of leadership training and promotional activities necessary to the foregoing. To teach and work with Posts and Districts to retain and increase membership, reactivate failing Posts and create new posts in areas with a veterans population that could support one. To formulate a process in which to inform, instruct, and train all Legion members in all aspects of the American Legion and its programs. It along with the Adjutant will plan the training at the Mid-Winter conference. with input from all aspects of the Legion family. The Commission and Legion College graduates along with the Adjutant will review any applicants to the National Legion College. To build brand awareness of, and support for, the primary mission and purpose of The American Legion among the individual citizens, the State of Connecticut Legislature, local government agencies, local municipalities and local corporate structure.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission

Organization: The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission shall consist of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a minimum of seven (7) members selected from the membership at large.

Purpose: To formulate and recommend to the Department Executive Committee of the American Legion, policies, plans and programs on direct assistance, outreach and support for veterans and their families with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims and benefits, health care, memorial affairs and Women Veterans programs. To ensure that they receive the highest quality of care from the VA for their injuries and illnesses incurred from their military service. To coordinate and communicate the activities of the Department of Connecticut in veteran's affairs. To oversee the effectiveness of The American Legion's programs of service to these war veterans and their dependents in claims for benefits administered by the Federal and State programs. To ensure eligible veterans receive that physical and vocational rehabilitation, education, social and economic readjustment, entitlement to compensation and pension and the support of their dependents and survivors. To oversee and communicate with the Department Service Officer and staff to ensure that all veterans, widows and dependents are receiving timely decisions on claims and timely receipt of earned benefits.

Assigned to the VA&R Commission for supervision and coordination are; Veterans Employment, Education, Benefits and Homelessness Committee; Veterans Administration and Volunteer Service Representatives.

Veterans Employment, Education, Benefits and Homelessness Committee

Organization: The Veterans Employment, Education, Benefits and Homelessness Committee shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and minimum of five (5) other members selected at large.
The Chairman will be a member of the VA&R Commission.

Purpose: To insure that Veterans educational benefits provided by the United States government to Veterans are sufficient to pay all of the cost of a college education at state-supported colleges, all of the costs of trade school education, and a substantial portion of education provided by privately owned colleges. To protect and insure that every generation of veterans has substantially the same or better benefits than the previous generation. To insure that state and local governments are allocating sufficient resources to alleviate and end the challenge of homelessness among America's Veterans. To insure that all Veterans receive the benefits to which they are entitled.
Such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the Department Convention or the Department Executive Committee.

Veterans Administration Volunteer Service Committee

Organization: To consist of a minimum of three (3) members to be appointed from amongst the membership of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission.

Purpose: At least one member to represent each of the three (3) Veterans Hospitals within the Department of Connecticut. To coordinate, record and promote volunteerism to enhance the lives of hospitalized veterans.

National Security Commission

Organization: The National Security shall consist of a Chairman (Program Director), Vice Chairman (Assistant Program Director) and up to seven (7) other members selected at large.

Purpose: To recommend policies that will ensure the National Security of the United States of America. To maintain a professional relationship with our National Guard, active Military Bases, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Personnel, Defense Contractors and

businesses within The Department of Connecticut. Annually recognize at the Department Convention one of the above, for their contributions in maintaining stability and support of our National Defense and Homeland Security. To provide Disaster Relief and Assistance in conjunction with local Posts and create guidelines and objectives by which to follow. Such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the Department Convention or the Department Executive Committee.

NATIONAL COMMITTEES

AEROSPACE:
CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES:
FOREIGN RELATIONS:
LAW AND ORDER & HOMELAND SECURITY:
MILITARY BENEFITS AND QUALITY OF LIFE:
NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE FORCES:
UNCONVENTIONAL FORCES AND INTELLIGENCE:
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL:

Department Commander's Advisory Committee

Organization: The Department Commander's Advisory Committee shall consist of the Immediate Past Commander, Department Adjutant, Department Treasurer, Department Judge Advocate and three (3) Past Department Commanders who shall serve a one (1) year term. Additional sections at the Department Commanders' discretion may be added.

Purpose: To advise, support and promote the Department Commander and his goals and policies for his term of office. Advisory Committee to meet in January, July and at the call of the Department Commander.

Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund Commission

Organization: The Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund Commission shall consist of nine (9) members, the Department Treasurer and the Department Assistant Treasurer. The Department Treasurer shall serve as the recording secretary with voice and vote. The Department Assistant Treasurer has voice with no vote. All commission members shall be Legionnaires in good standing, nominated by the Department Treasurer, and approved by the Department Executive Committee. The

chairperson will be elected from among the commission members. All members shall serve a three (3) year term (staggered).

Purpose: To provide assistance to qualifying wartime veterans who have been honorably discharged from military service, spouses living with the veteran, surviving spouses who were living with the veteran at the time of his/her death, and dependent children of the veteran under eighteen (18) years of age as outlined in Connecticut General Statutes 27-138 and 27-140. Assistance may **only** be provided to legal residents of Connecticut. Applicants must reside in Connecticut at the time of application and while in receipt of assistance. Assistance may be provided for quality of life items such as food, clothing, medical care and shelter for oneself and one's dependents. The fund administrators shall approve all applications.

Special Committees

Citizens Flag Alliance
Golf Tournament
LIT Insurance Program
Department Commanders Dinner
National Commanders Visit
American Legion Hall of Fame
POW/MIA
WEB-MASTER
Department Color Guard
Department Initiation Team
Women's Veterans Outreach Coordinator

History

May 11, 2015:
Original draft & concept adopted by Department Executive Committee.

March 14, 2016:
Revised copy including details previously in Dept. Bylaws, Article II, and additional details of organization and purpose approved by D.E.C.

May 20 2019:
Revised details of Committees and Commissions approved by D.E.C.

September 23, 2025
Revised details of Committees and Commissions approved by D.E.C.

January 30, 2026
Revised details of Committees and Commissions approved by D.E.C.

September 21, 2026
Revised details of Committees and Commissions approved by D.E.C.