

Duties of Officers

Prepared by Vice Commander Chris Hamrick from the
Department of Florida Area Training Guide



POST ADMINISTRATION Chain of Command

The responsibility given to the individual Post is the source of our strength and growth.

The Post is to a large degree autonomous, restricted only by broad general guidelines made clear in the National or Department Constitution and By-Laws.

Post officers, Executive Committee, and membership work together to establish the rules and guidelines of the Post as outlined in the Post Constitution and By-Laws.

In most cases, issues involving Post operations need to be addressed at the Post level.

If an issue involves the upper echelon of the Post leadership or is not being properly addressed at the Post, you are encouraged to contact your District Commander for assistance.

POST OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Commander:
- That you have ability is recognized by your election to the office of Post Commander.
- Now you must draw on your ability and experience while developing new skills so that you will succeed in helping the Post prosper.
- The charge you accepted, Commander, is broad and difficult. How you respond will determine to a large degree that standing of The American Legion among your associates and within the community. Your own ability, the help you obtain from District and Department Officers, the information contained in this guide, and the help you will get from the Post Officers who form your team, all combine to make the performance of your job possible.
- As you look to the overall operation of the Post, you realize that you have reached another level. You may feel that the step is too high, but as you proceed, following the guidelines suggested, you will develop organization and leadership among others that will make your year as Commander the most rewarding of your life. Important things you should know:
- **REFER TO HAND OUT-Principles of Leadership**

Does your Post have insurance?

On October 14-15, 2020, the National Executive Committee adopted Resolution No. 35, titled “Insurance Requirements”. Resolution No. 35 specifies additional insurance requirements for EVERY POST of The American Legion.

- The next new term applies more to liability insurance, but an additional insured would have their names (The American Legion and AL Department of Florida) listed on all your insurance policies. Should a lawsuit or any other claim occur the Post is held liable, and the additional insured is protected, and should the additional insured incur costs they would be reimbursed by the insurance company.

- Usually, additional insured is commonly used in conjunction with an indemnity agreement (like Resolution 35) between the named insured (the Post) and the party requesting additional insured status (The American Legion and AL Department of Florida). Every insurance policy held in a Posts name, must specifically reflect The American Legion and The American Legion Department of Florida as named additional insured.

Is your Post incorporated ?

- Each Post in Florida is required to be incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida (Department Constitution, Article X, Section 19). This is required not only to protect the Post but the membership of the Post. If a Post is not incorporated and a lawsuit is brought against the Post, the Post, its Officers, and its members may be held financially liable. Information on incorporating or validating a corporation status can be done on dos.myflorida.com/sunbiz/.

- Are your Post Officers bonded?

- All Post Officials handling American Legion monies are required to be properly bonded by a bonding and surety company for double the average amount of money handled in a year. This is required per The American Legion National Headquarters' By-Laws (Article VI, Section 1).

Does your Post file tax returns?

- All Posts are required to file a tax return (Form 990) each year regardless of income or tax exempt status. Failure to submit the required form will result in the loss of the Post's tax exempt status.

Does your Post participate in at least one Legion program each year?

- Each Post in Florida is required to participate in at least one recognized program of The American Legion in order to maintain their charter (Department Constitution, Article X)

Are your Post's By-Laws up to date?

- A Post's By-Laws provide direction on the operation of the Post. As time passes, updates may be needed to coincide with the operation of the Post. It's recommended that Post By-Laws are updated at least every three (3) years and reviewed at least once per year.

Does your Post membership receive a monthly finance report?

Every Post is required to make a report to the membership at least once per month concerning the status of all financial activities and all facilities of the Post. The report shall include, but not be limited to, Total Income, Cost of Sales, Expenses, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Inventory, a Profit and Loss Statement, any agreement concerning use of facilities and any other information necessary to provide the membership with sufficient information to make decisions concerning these activities and facilities (Department Constitution).

Adjutant

- The Adjutant holds the same relative position as the “First Sergeant” of the company. Post activities revolve around the Adjutant.
- Most Posts find it wise to retain a good Adjutant in office over a period of years. The Adjutant may well be regarded as the “continuity person” and the Commander’s right hand in the Post. While the Commander’s duties are largely inspirational and executive, an Adjutant’s duties are administrative.
- The Commander navigates the ship, but the Adjutant is the engineer who runs the ship’s machinery.
- The Adjutant is the Personnel Officer, the intimate contact with the individual Post member.

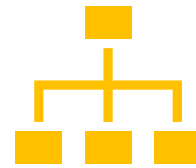
Duties include but are not limited to:



a. Maintaining membership records.



b. Creating an agenda and taking meeting minutes.



c. Oversees and assists in the work of the other Officers and Committees.



d. Publishes official orders, announcements, and instructions.

He/She should go through all the Post records at the first opportunity.

The Constitution, minutes of meetings, and reports of Officers and Committees will give an insight in to the Post's policies and traditions.

Communications from Department Headquarters shall keep the Adjutant up to date on instructions.

CPR/Addendum etc.

- District Commanders will be held accountable to ensure the forms are submitted to the Department or electronically through myLegion.org

First Vice
Commander

In the majority of Posts, a First and Second Vice Commander are elected, with membership being the primary concern of the First Vice Commander.

While each Post is different, any membership campaign should cover certain fundamentals

- Look at the methods used in the past.
- Were they successful?
- Do they need updating?
- Have new procedures been developed that would improve the plans now being used?
- A new Post Commander will contact the Post Officers and Committee Chairs right after being elected, either individually or at a special meeting.
- In this meeting, the First Vice Commander will lay out a general plan of operation and membership plan for the entire year.
- The First Vice Commander will work closely with the Adjutant and Program Chairs on these plans to ensure a Post's success.
- **SEE HANDOUT-Principles of Leadership**

Second, Third
and Fourth
Vice
Commanders
as needed by
the Post

- The Vice Commanders are responsible for building the morale of their Post to ensure Legionnaires have fun while still doing the work of the Legion.
- SEE HANDOUT-Principles of Leadership



Their responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- * Taking charge of Post activities.
- * All building and grounds maintenance.
- * Providing programs that spice up meetings and attract attendance.
- * Keep the social calendar filled several months in advance with activities that will bring out the active members as well as card-carrying Legionnaires.

Finance Officer

The Finance Officer must be a person of proven integrity and experience in handling financial affairs.

The Post is dependent on finance, just as any other organization, and will do well to accept expert advice in formulating and administering its financial policy.

The Finance Officer usually serves as the chair of the Finance Committee and is in charge of all receiving and disbursing of Post funds and therefore should be familiar with the various forms involved.

The Post Adjutant, in all matters relating to finance, should carry on the work in close correlation with the Finance Officer.



Judge Advocate

- The primary duty of the Judge Advocate is to supply professional advice in the conduct of the Post business or to procure proper counsel and is the guardian of constitutional form of Post government.
- Your Judge Advocate can supply valuable assistance to other Post committees and Officers.



District Commander

- The Post is a separate and distinct unit, which functions independently.
- But the work of the Post can be more effective if it is joined by a tight link to the Department and National organization.
- The District and your District Officers provide that link.
- The District Commander is normally the elected representative of the Posts in the District, but an obligation to provide guidance and supervision is also implied.
- Posts are charged with carrying out the objectives and programs of the Legion and to comply fully with the obligations assumed under the Post, Department and National Constitutions.
- But, if your Post becomes inactive or begins to falter, you can expect your District Commander to start giving advice.

- The District Commander should visit your Post at least twice per year. Installation does not count.
- If you haven't received a visit from your District commander in a while, reach out to him/her with a personal invitation..

- The District Commander is also expected to complete a Post Visitation Report when he/she visits.
- Please work with the commander to answer all the questions, work out a plan for any issues that needed to be addressed and sign the form showing that they visited and that you both understand the content of the report

- Duties of the District Commander (Department By-Law, Article V, Section 5):
 - The District Commanders shall be the representative of the Department Commander on all matters referred to his/her District. It shall be the duty of the District Commander at all times to cooperate with officers of the Post in his/her District.
 - Duties include but are not limited to:
 - * Visit each Post in his/her District at least twice a year.
 - *Lend his/her best efforts to stimulate Legion growth.
 - * Investigate all new applications for new Post Charters and to recommend the granting or refusal of such application to the Department Executive Committee.

- *Encourage the amalgamation of weak posts into strong and representative Posts.
- *Promote inter-Post activities and a spirit of cooperation among the Posts in his/her Districts for the development of the principles of The American Legion.
- * Install the Post Officers of all Posts in his/her District or assign a designee to do so.

Duties of the Vice District Commander (Department By-Laws, Article V, Section 6):

- In addition to serving on the Department Executive Committee, District Vice Commander shall assist the District Commander in the performance of his duties, and shall have such other duties as the District Commander, the Department Executive Committee, the Department Convention and the Department Contrition and By-Laws may assign.

Area Commander

The Area Commander serves as the official representative of the Department Commander in his/her Area ensuring the aims and goals of the Department are carried out.

The Area Commander speaks with the authority of the Department and provides supervision for the Districts located in their Area.

If the Area Commander visits your Post, they should be shown the respect and dignity due to the office they hold.

Duties of the Area Commander
(Department By-Laws, Article V,
Section 4)

The Department Area Commanders shall be the personal representatives of the Department Commander in their respective Department Areas.

It shall be the duty of the Area Commander at all times to cooperate, act as liaison and regularly communicate with the District Commanders in his/her Area and assist them in the furtherance and coordination of the work of the American Legion and in the promotion of membership in his/her Area.

The Area Commander is elected by a majority vote of his/her Area's registered delegates to the Department Convention and serves as the official representative of the Department Commander in his/her Area ensuring the aims and goals of the Department are carried out.

As such, attendance and participation at official meetings of The American Legion are vital. At a minimum, the Area Commander should attend/perform the following:

* Department Convention – preside as Chair over his/her Area Caucus at the Department Convention. →

* Fall Conference.

* Department Oratorical Contest.

* Finance Committee Meetings

* Department Executive Committee Meetings

* Department Commander's Homecoming.

* Installation of Department Officers and as many Post Installations in his/her Area as possible.

* District Meetings within his/her Area.

Visit	*Visit each Post within his/her Area at least once (not counting Installation of Post Officers).
Submit	*Submit a monthly article for the Legion Link.
Schedule	*Schedule an Area Conference, which may include an Area Ball.
Schedule	*Schedule two or more joint meetings with all District and Vice Commanders.
Schedule	*Schedule two or more round table meetings with District and Post Commanders in each District

Schedule

*Schedule two or more membership promotions within his/her Area utilizing National Legion College graduates as coordinated with Department.

Provide

* Provide written reports on activities and other reports at the interval directed by the Department Commander.

Complete

*Complete the Legion Extension Institute Course



See You Again!

THANK YOU!

Soon!