

2012

Post Adjutant's Manual

Procedures and Guidelines

THE AMERICAN LEGION



Membership Eligibility Dates



WORLD WAR I

APRIL 6, 1917 TO NOVEMBER 11, 1918

WORLD WAR II

DECEMBER 7, 1941 TO DECEMBER 31, 1946

MERCHANT MARINE

DECEMBER 7, 1941 TO DECEMBER 31, 1946

KOREAN WAR

JUNE 25, 1950 TO JANUARY 31, 1955

VIETNAM WAR

FEBRUARY 28, 1961 TO MAY 7, 1975

LEBANON & GRENADA

AUGUST 24, 1982 TO JULY 31, 1984

PANAMA

DECEMBER 20, 1989 TO JANUARY 31, 1990

GULF WAR/WAR ON TERRORISM

AUGUST 2, 1990 TO CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AS
DETERMINED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Disclaimer of Liability

With respect to information contained in this document neither The American Legion nor any of its employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, nor assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process implemented at the post or department level. All items of information contained in this document are suggestions except for the National Constitution and By-laws. You should consult your own counsel for "best practices" when dealing with any business operations or The American Legion programs even those which are covered by resolutions approved by the National Executive Committee or National Convention.

Table of Contents

SECTION I – POST CHARTERS	4
SECTION II - REPORTS	5
Consolidated Post Reports	5
Data Report, Annual Report.....	6
Post Officer Certification	6
SECTION III – MEMBERSHIP (Eligibility, Renewals, Cards, Rosters).....	6
Eligibility	6
Guard and Reserve	6
DMS.....	8
Direct Renewal	8
Continuous Membership Certificates	10
Member Data Form	11
Change of Address	11
Stay Active	12
Membership Cards/Registers.....	12
Honorary Membership	20
Honorary Life Membership	20
Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL)	20
SECTION IV – MYLEGION.ORG	23
SECTION V – NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND (NEF)	24
SECTION VI – TRAINING/AMERICAN LEGION EXTENSION INSTITUTE (ALEI)	26
SECTION VII - RECONNECT	27
SECTION VIII – RESOLUTIONS	28
SECTION IX – POST SERVICE OFFICER	29
SECTION X – FUNERAL HONORS	30
SECTION XI – MAGAZINE AND DISPATCH	30
SECTION XII – MILITARY AWARDS/DECORATIONS AND MILITARY RECORDS	31
SECTION XIII – POST ADJUTANT QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE	35

FOREWORD

This manual is provided for the post adjutant's use. The *Post Adjutant's Manual* is intended as a blueprint to assist you in handling the business affairs of the post and to provide efficient and effective service to your members.

The *Post Adjutant's Manual* is a work in progress and will never be complete as long as suggestions and recommendations flow from officers and members in the local posts.

The National organization does not have all the answers to every problem that might arise in various situations, but we are dedicated to making the job of the post adjutant easier and ensuring the long-term growth and stability of The American Legion. By following the information contained in this manual, we hope the objectives of this great organization, which has served America's veterans since 1919, are achieved.

Thank you for **"Still Serving America!"**

Adjutant -

"My comrade, you have been chosen to assist your Commander in the wise and effective administration of that office and to serve not only your fellow Legionnaires, but also those whose relationship to our organization has led them to look to us for guidance and relief. You will find the duties many, varied, and at times taxing of your crowded hours and resources. The successful accomplishment of our programs depends, to a great extent, upon you and your performance of the duties of your office."

--Charge from the Installation Ceremony

Adjutant

The adjutant holds the same relative position in the post as the secretary of any other organized body, and a little more. The adjutant is the “1st Sergeant” of the company, around whom all post activities revolve. Many posts find it wise to retain a good adjutant in office over a period of years. Likewise, a good post will recognize when it is time to change adjutants.

The adjutant may well provide continuity 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 and ensures everything is on an even keel.

The adjutant is the personnel officer, the intimate contact with the individual member of the post, who keeps the membership records, minutes of meetings, checks up and assists the work of other officers and committees, publishes official orders, announcements and instructions.

Suggestions for the Adjutant

The only indispensable qualifications are honesty and willingness. The adjutant should obtain a set of post account books (consult your current National Emblem Sales catalog for description and prices). These books require no special knowledge of bookkeeping. The new adjutant should go through all post records at the earliest opportunity. The constitution and by-laws, minutes of meetings and reports of officers and committees will give an insight into the post’s policies and traditions. Communications from department and national headquarters will provide additional updates, information and instructions. Your department headquarters and staff can be your most useful tools as an adjutant.

For minutes of meetings, a loose-leaf binder that will hold letter-size sheets is recommended. This will permit the minutes to be neatly typewritten and then inserted in the binder. When the binder becomes filled, the contents should be kept as a permanent record of activities. All reports of officers and committees should be included in the minutes of the meeting to which they are submitted to assure they’re being made a part of the permanent record.

Bulletins & Periodicals

A complete file of *The American Legion Magazine* and the department and post periodicals, if any are published, should be kept. Bind them into annual volumes. The *Dispatch* is sent to the post adjutant once a month. Keep these for reference. (*see Dispatch, page 31*)

Bulletins are mailed periodically to post commanders and adjutants. The adjutant should forward applicable information to each post committee chair. The only official contact your department headquarters has with the post is through the commander and adjutant. The adjutant should read all communications received from your department or national headquarters to keep abreast of what is going on and that information should be communicated to your post membership.

Post Bulletins & Publications

A new adjutant will soon learn the reasons for preparations. The members will inquire about everything that concerns their connection with The American Legion. Your job is to satisfy them. The adjutant can convey information and instructions to them through a regular series of post bulletins. This activity may be expanded into the publication of a post paper. Communicate! Communicate!

The adjutant’s office should be a clearing-house for all post activities. The adjutant should help new officers and committees get started with their work and provide direction to their endeavors while affording them all possible help. Help is not the same as interference.

SECTION I POST CHARTERS – (Naming of a post, change of post name, location change, temporary, permanent, supplemental charters and tax exempt status)

- **Naming A Post after an Individual and/or Name Changes** - The individual must be deceased and the post must have the family's written permission to name a post after their family member. If naming the post after an individual when establishing a charter, attach the letter with the application. If changing the name when applying for a permanent charter or after the permanent charter has already been established, send a copy of the minutes or the resolution, or both, to the department headquarters and the department will request the name change.

If a post has a Sons of The American Legion squadron, it will always be changed to reflect the Legion post information. A new replacement charter and SAL charter, if applicable, will be issued. For further information contact the department headquarters.

- **Location Change Procedure** - If a post requests a location change, a letter from the post adjutant, commander or other authorized representative needs to be sent to your department headquarters and your department will request the location change. The letter needs to include a copy of the minutes or resolution, or both, the old location and the new location. The department will then forward the location change request to national. A new replacement permanent charter and SAL charter, if applicable, will not be issued. For further information contact your department headquarters.
- **Temporary Charter** - Any group of eligible veterans may apply for a post charter in The American Legion from the national organization through the department headquarters after meeting all department requirements. The executive committee of the department in whose area the post lies shall determine the minimum membership and starting make up of a post.

A temporary charter application is to be filled out in triplicate, and is to be typewritten. The instructions are included on the application, which is available from the department. National no longer requires signatures from new members. The name of the new post that appears on the temporary charter may only be changed at such time as an application for a permanent charter is submitted.

The organizer of the post must sign all three copies and list their address. The organizer's address is used for the post's mailing address until the post finds a permanent address. An Annual Post Data Report (*see page 6*) is sent with the temporary charter to the post, thus enabling the post to list the dues, permanent address and dues mailing address, if different than the permanent address.

For further information contact your department headquarters.

After a Post has functioned with a temporary charter for a minimum of ninety (90) days, it can apply for a permanent charter. This form, available from your department, is filled out in triplicate and sent to your department headquarters to be signed and forwarded to National Headquarters for the issuance of the charter instructions for this form are on the back of the application.

For further information contact your department headquarters.

- **Permanent Charter** - After a post has functioned with a temporary charter for a minimum of ninety (90) days, it can apply for a permanent charter. This form, available from your department, is filled out in triplicate and sent to your department headquarters to be signed and forwarded to national headquarters for the issuance of the charter. Instructions for this form are on the back of the application. For further information contact your department headquarters.

- **Supplemental Charter** - When a post becomes incorporated, it is necessary to apply for a supplemental charter. When a post incorporates and changes its name, the change is usually enough for it to be considered by the government as a new entity, thereby requiring another Employer Identification Number (EIN). The old one is normally invalid; play it safe, get a new one. This number is obtained through the IRS by submitting an SS-4 Form.

The incorporation of a post modifies the information sent in on the earlier inclusion letter reporting your EIN with the national organization. The legal name of the post will appear on the incorporation papers or corporate charter with the state in which it is located. A change in the name, even just adding “INC” to the name, will be reported to the IRS in September.

We need to maintain your correct, legal and accurate post name on this report for IRS exactly as it appears on the corporate charter from the state. Any changes are to be sent to the national office so the IRS records will remain up-to-date and the post can avoid any IRS issues.

When requesting a supplemental charter, please fill the form out in triplicate. A copy of your Articles of Incorporation, issued by the state, is a required attachment to the supplemental charter application, which is available from your department office.

If the name of the Legion charter changes while a supplemental charter is in place, the supplemental charter will be null and void. A new supplemental charter application and Articles of Incorporation will need to be submitted to reflect the new name of the Legion charter. For further information contact your department headquarters.

- **Incorporation** – When a post becomes incorporated and makes the appropriate application to national headquarters as evidence of this action they will be issued a supplemental charter, properly attested by the duly authorized officers of your department and national headquarters.
- **Tax Exempt Status** - Federal Tax Regulations require every subordinate American Legion post that is obligated to file an Annual Information Return (Form 990), or if they maintain a bank account, must have an Employer Identification Number (EIN).

The American Legion is tax exempt under Section 501 (c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. Every post needs to obtain an EIN from the government. All newly chartered posts receive an SS-4 form in their new post kit, prepared and sent by national. The instructions should be closely followed in completing and submitting the SS-4 form.

When you receive the post EIN, send a copy of the number and the Inclusion Letter (also in the packet) to national headquarters so the post may be listed as a tax-exempt charter of The American Legion. A listing of all new posts, plus updates, is sent to the IRS each September 30th. Your bank and various vendors will also need this number – protect it.

SECTION II - Reports

- **Consolidated Post Reports (CPR) Form** – Each post is required to file an annual report with department headquarters. A convenient report form, called the CPR, is sent to each post from your department headquarters providing the requested data on programs and activities. Your completed report is compiled into a final report presented to Congress each year by the national commander as justification for our non-profit status and to brag about what we do as an organization in our communities. The required turn in time to department headquarters is July 1 of each year. This gives national headquarters time to tally all the reports. The CPR form must also be completed on MyLegion.org (*see more on MyLegion.org, page 22*) as well as downloaded from the Legion website (legion.org).

- **Data Report, Annual Post Data Report** – Throughout the year it is necessary for national staff to contact posts regarding membership renewals, awards, *Dispatch* subscriptions, veterans' issues or other important information. Maintaining current post information on national's files has become more important than ever. Each February the *Annual Post Data Report* is mailed from national headquarters to department headquarters for distribution to their respective posts. Each form is preprinted with current contact information from national's data system. This preprinted form for your post is sent for annual springtime reporting. If there is a change at other times, send those changes to your department headquarters and your department will forward changes to national. Any and all changes must first go through your department headquarters for processing. Any changes received at national directly from a post will be returned with no action.
- **Post Officer Certification** - It is critical for the post adjutant to report all post officers to the department headquarters immediately after their election. The department may furnish a special reporting form for this purpose or you may receive reporting forms provided by national to your department. All national mailings are addressed to post officers. It is imperative that all contact information for post officers are up to date and correct.

SECTION III – MEMBERSHIP (Eligibility, DMS, Renewals, Cards, Rosters)

- **Eligibility, Membership** – As provided in the Constitution and By-Laws, Article IV *Section 1*. Any person shall be eligible for membership in THE AMERICAN LEGION who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Air Force 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 December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990 to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the government of the United States; 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 *during or* 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. There shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership, and dues shall be paid annually or for life.

Section 3. No person may be a member at any one time of more than one post.

Section 4. 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 asked for and 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.

- **National Guard & Reserve Eligibility; National Guard & Reserve Examples** – National Guard & Reserves (Reserve components) are required to meet the same eligibility requirements as the federal active duty veterans.

To be eligible, the National Guardsman and Reservist must have served at least one day on federal active duty during any of the delimiting periods as set forth in Article IV, Section 1 of The American Legion National Constitution. The person must either have an honorable discharge or currently be serving either in the Guard/Reserve or on federal active duty.

The key to determining if a Guardsman and Reservist has been on or is currently serving on federal active duty is the “AUTHORITY LINE” on the activation orders of the Guardsman/Reservist.

In both cases “TITLE 10, SUBSECTION 672 OR 12301” are orders from the Secretary of Defense and are federal orders.

The authority the Governor uses to activate the National Guard as an individual or Unit is “Title 32” orders, i.e. Weekend Drills and Annual Training. These are not federal orders. The Reserves have similar reserve orders, which are “Title 10, Subsection 270.” This authority code gives the reserve component the authority to activate the reserves for weekend drills and annual training.

Use the chart below when determining eligibility for National Guard and Reserves.

	<u>ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>NON-ELIGIBLE</u>
NATIONAL GUARD	TITLE 10, SUBSECTION 672 or 12301*	TITLE 32
RESERVES	TITLE 10, SUBSECTION 672 or 12301*	TITLE 10, SUBSECTION 270

*This Subsection was created following Desert Storm to replace 672.

The above information was taken from Military Law Chapter 39.

Note: A DD-214 will be issued for the time on federal active duty or a DA-1059 for a completion of a school will be issued with a character type of discharge. All Reserve components send their service members to “Basic Training” using Title 10, Subsection 672/12301 orders.

The following examples are provided to help answer most membership eligibility questions regarding National Guard and Reserve (Reserve component) veteran.

- **National Guard Example** - If a traditional National Guard soldier/airman (i.e., one who never was stationed with an active duty unit) performed basic training during one of our eligibility dates, that soldier/airman would qualify for membership because that time on active duty was federal, Title 10 duty.

If the above soldier/airman performed basic training outside the dates, that soldier/airman may still qualify for membership if they were ever activated for federal service. Two week Annual Training (AT) does not normally qualify one for membership, but if AT was under federal control, going out of country for two weeks to drill, then those orders were federal orders. If that time was during the dates, they qualify for membership in TAL. This gets to the DD214 issue. The soldier/airman described above would not receive a DD214, but they do receive a copy of their orders and that copy would serve as basis to qualify a potential member. (*see chart above*)

- **Reserves Example** - If a traditional Reservist soldier (i.e., one who never was stationed with an active duty unit) performed basic training during one of our eligibility dates, that soldier/sailor/airman/Marine would qualify for membership because that time on active duty was federal, Title 10 duty.

This gets to the DD214 issue or proof of eligibility. The soldier/sailor/airman/Marine described above would not receive a DD214, but they would receive a copy of their orders and that copy would serve as basis to qualify a potential member. All reservists are under federal control so all their orders are Title 10, Subsection 270. Those orders do not qualify a reservist for membership, but if they receive Title 10, Subsection 672 orders, then that would be active duty service that qualifies them for membership in TAL. (*see chart on page 7*)

As with all membership eligibility, if further clarification is needed, contact your department headquarters. Reserve component service members are an excellent source of young talent and a very large and growing pool of eligible, potential members.

- **Direct Membership Solicitation (DMS)** - The DMS program is a form of direct marketing used to solicit membership in The American Legion. Mailing lists are rented from commercial list brokers. Lists are compared with our membership files to remove the names of members from the rented lists.

Next, we mail out a letter over the signature of the national commander (or his representative), which outlines many of The American Legion's past accomplishments, our current concerns and reasons why we need the prospective member's support.

If the prospect wishes to join, he or she completes the application form enclosed, certifying their dates of service in the U.S. armed forces, their character of discharge, their branch of service and their birth date. Then the applicant returns the form with a check in the envelope provided. National headquarters sends them a membership card signed electronically with the signature of the national adjutant, a welcome letter, and other information. These new members are transmitted into the department headquarters post in the state in which they live in accordance with the current policies of the National Executive Committee.

Lists of the DMS, or headquarters post members, in your area are available from your department headquarters. Contact your department membership chairman, DMS chairman or department adjutant. Each year national recruits 190,000 + new members. Utilizing these lists is an excellent way to increase your post's membership, thus giving a boost to your activities in your communities and giving The American Legion a louder voice in Congress.

For the program to be truly effective, it is imperative these new members are personally contacted and invited to transfer into your local post. It is the ultimate responsibility of the post receiving a DMS transfer to verify the new member's eligibility, using the Form DD214 or other official proof of honorable service with the U.S. armed forces.

For further information regarding the DMS program, contact your department headquarters.

- **Direct Renewal Dues Notices** (*see "Post Data Report", page 6*) *Post Mailing Address, Dues Amount* – National headquarters mails annually to almost all Legionnaires, one or more notices that their annual dues for the coming year may be paid to the post.

This is made possible by printing on every renewal notice the exact amount of each post's dues and the exact address to which dues are to be mailed. Every year in early spring your department headquarters will be asking the post to provide this information. If your post is already in the program, you will still need to verify the address and dues amount. Please make sure the information provided has no error. A mistake in either the address for mailing the dues or the dues amount will cause endless trouble. Most renewal notices will be provided and mailed by The

American Legion National Headquarters at no cost. At any time the annual dues of your post changes or if the remittances address changes, your post should immediately contact the department.

- **Post Mailing Address** - If at all possible, your post should use a permanent mailing address – either a post office box or the address of the post home. Do not use the name of the adjutant or other individual unless no other address is available. Difficulties arise when officers change, the individual moves, becomes sick or dies.
- **Dues Amount** - Only one dues amount can be shown for each Post. For example, national cannot print “\$20.00 until November 1, \$25.00 after November 1.”
- **Participation/Schedule** - Participation in the renewal program for notices mailed in the summer through the end of the year is on a voluntary basis (unless your department has mandated participation). Posts must notify their department prior to May 1 if they want to be deleted or added to the summer renewal mailings.

Renewals mailed after January through the spring will be sent to **ALL** delinquent members in **ALL** posts. Also, information on the mailing(s) will be described in various publications going to posts.

❖ **Omitting Members from the Renewal Mailing** - Some posts have members whose dues are paid by the post (Honorary Life Members, 50-year members, past commanders, etc.). If your post has members to whom a renewal should not be sent, please send a letter in the following format (sign and date) to your department headquarters:

“Please notify national headquarters that renewal notices should not be printed for the following member(s) of this Post:”

9-DIGIT MEMBER ID NUMBER	HONORARY LIFE MEMBER (✓)	NAME	ADDRESS, INCLUDING ZIP
-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------	-----------------------------------

(List more names/membership information as necessary)

Note: In sending the name, address, and 9-digit I.D. number, check your membership register and submit the name and I.D. number exactly as they appear on the register. The address should also be given in the same way, unless the address on the register is incorrect.

❖ **Code C (No Renewal)** - The membership register, shown later in this manual, will detail members who have previously been coded so they will not receive a renewal notice. Check the “**EX Flag**” column on the right side of the register between “**CER Flag**” & “**ERA**.” The letter “**C**” printed in the column means the member will not receive a renewal from national headquarters. Please do not send in a second request to remove a member from the renewal list if a “**C**” is printed on the register for the member. All Paid Up For Life, honorary life and department life members are automatically excluded from renewal mailings; it is not necessary to request the “**C**” for these members.

❖ **Renewal Schedule** - Normally, during each membership year, National sends five renewal notices. The following is the renewal schedule: July, October, January, March, and May.

Sometimes, at the request of a department, a special notice in February may be mailed to boost a department’s renewals.

The 2013 membership year renewal schedules for transmitting membership dues to arrive at national by the established dates are outlined below. This schedule will be followed in order to remove the names of paid members prior to a specific mailing. Using the renewal schedule, national extracts unpaid member records, then prints and mails the renewal notices.

REGULAR LEGION MEMBERSHIP

2013 RENEWAL NOTICE SCHEDULES

<u>CUTOFF DATES</u>	<u>RENEWAL DATES</u>
MAY 3, 2012	JULY 2, 2012
*SEPTEMBER 12, 2012	OCTOBER 1, 2012
*DECEMBER 12, 2012	**JANUARY 2, 2013
*FEBRUARY 13, 2013	**MARCH 4, 2013
*APRIL 10, 2013	**APRIL 29, 2013

* Cutoff date is also a membership target date. Transmittals received after this date will not prevent a subsequent notice from being delivered at or around the renewal date.

** Mandatory renewal notice – all delinquent members.

- **Dues Notices** – For posts that may not be under the national plan of direct renewals, first and second notices and a dues letter may be obtained in the necessary quantity from the department headquarters at no charge.
- **Continuous Membership Certificates** – Although it's the responsibility of the individual American Legion post to maintain continuous membership records for each Legionnaire, national headquarters offers its facilities to help compile and maintain accurate records. Years of continuous membership are recorded on the data system at national headquarters after the post has reported them. As far as national headquarters' records will permit, years of continuous membership are printed on the individual's membership card each year. If a member's continuous years do not show on the card, or if the number of years is wrong, a correction should be made by the adjutant by completing the Member Data Form (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)

50, 60, 70, 75, 80 or 85-Year Certificates - In January or early February of each year, certificates are issued by national headquarters in the name of every member credited on the national records with a minimum of 50 years of continuous membership, and who has not previously received this award. A member receives only one of these special awards for each specified year. The certificates are sent to each post having members who qualify. Each post should receive the certificates in mid-to-late-February. It is suggested the certificates be presented at a special ceremony held in connection with The American Legion birthday, March 15-17.

Your membership register will list all members of the post for whom certificates have been issued. If you have members who will reach 50 years of continuous membership this year, be sure to get their dues transmitted in order to reach National Headquarters by January 1 so their record will be updated and they receive the certificate. If you have members with 50 or more years of membership, but have never received the certificate, send a Member Data Form (*see Member Data Form, page 11*), to correct their record so they can receive the award and recognition they are entitled to receive.

- **Member Data Form (Stock # 30-001) Processing and Transfer of Membership** - The member data form, available from your department headquarters, is a multi-purpose form for use in keeping better track of and providing accurate information on the members of your post. There is a separate form for members of The American Legion and one for members of the Sons of The American Legion (Stock # 00-007). Both forms are available from your department headquarters.

Instructions for the use of the member data form can be found on the reverse side of the form. The American Legion member data form can be used to report:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a) Deceased member | b) Continuous years | c) Name correction |
| d) Change of address | e) 1 st war era served | f) Branch of service |
| g) Telephone number | h) Date of birth | i) Honorary Life member |
| j) Post transfer | k) E-mail address | |

Always include the 9-digit Member ID Number, post number and department name. The signature of the authorized post officer is always needed and will be included at the bottom of the form. Route the parts of the member data form as follows:

- Parts 1-3: mail to department headquarters
Part 4: retain in post files

The information reported on the member data form should also be entered in the appropriate area on the post membership register for easy reference.

- **Snowbird Status Reporting** – National Headquarters is discontinuing its “Snowbird” address change service. Experience has shown that we’re duplicating the time and effort spent processing and maintaining the requests.

The vast majority of seasonal address changes are received through our weekly updates from the USPS, and we’ve found that a lot of the members continue to contact us anyway by phone, email and correspondence, to notify us. There were also problems and confusion caused by members moving at times that differed from the dates they reported on the former Snowbird form. Member Data Forms may also be used.

- **Transfer of Membership** - Membership transfer from one post to another is accomplished by completing the member data form (30-001), (*see above*) available from your department headquarters. The right to transfer does not carry the right to be accepted by any post. Post members still must vote upon acceptance of applicant. Being the member of more than one post at one time is a violation of The American Legion Constitution.

The only method of transferring from one post to another so continuity of membership in The American Legion is not broken is by formal transfer, and it is available to members in good standing.

Many members who change posts simply start paying dues in the new post without the formality of an official transfer. This can result in a duplicate (and unnecessary) record entered on the data system. When a transfer is made this way, there is a danger the member will lose his/her continuous membership record unless the post adjutant gives the member full credit at the time the card is made.

Without the official transfer, the member will also likely receive a renewal notice from national headquarters asking for dues for the next year to be sent to the post where the membership was formerly held; second, third and fourth renewals can also be sent if the proper procedures are not followed.

In all instances where a member of The American Legion during a current year transfers from one post to another after payment of the current year's dues, the transferring post shall retain said dues and shall have credit for such membership during the remainder of such year for which said dues were collected, but said transferred member shall be entitled to all of the benefits and assume all of the responsibilities of membership in the post to which transfer is made, after such transfer is effected.

VERY IMPORTANT: Always ask a prospective member if he/she currently belongs or has been a member. If they have a current or previous 9-digit member ID number, it should be reported on the transfer request and dues card forwarded to your department.

❖ **“Project Stay Active”** - Americans are on the move and Legionnaires are no exception. The Membership Input Services Section processes approximately 31 thousand address changes per month. National headquarters has set up “Project Stay Active” to help local posts maintain contact with these members who move into your area.

Utilizing the computer, national prints out a summary of the veteran's membership on a 3 x 5 card. Each card will have listed on it: both the new and old address, the department the member belongs to, the post number, the number of continuous years, and the date the card was printed. If the member is a Life Member, it will be noted as well.

The cards are printed in zip code order and mailed to department adjutants for distribution to the post most accessible to the member. This post is then asked to contact and welcome the member into the area. This would be an opportune time to offer assistance in establishing service and to invite the member to visit your post.

In many cases, the Legionnaire may wish to transfer membership to a post in the community. As may be expected, some of these Legionnaires are involved in temporary moves, some may have a Life Membership “back home,” and others may have sentimental feelings toward their hometown post. However, many of them will be receptive to an offer to transfer to your post when asked.

“Project Stay Active” has been in operation for several years and has proved beneficial to the post, the Legionnaires, and their families.

Departments actively participating in “Project Stay Active” are generally distributing the cards each month through the district or county commander. These departments always have a reserve of prospects to “Get Involved” in The American Legion.

❖ **Membership Card - Background Information, ID Number, Name of Post, Scan Line & Pre-printed Card Information Explained** – Membership cards are pre-printed at national headquarters with the names and addresses of your previous year's members and with the number and location of your post. The card is made up of three parts and is called the record card.

At the extreme right of the pre-printed three-part card is the “Official Membership Card,” to be given to the member after dues have been paid. The left portion ends up at national, and your department gets the middle portion.

The left and middle portions of the pre-printed three-part card are identified as “The American Legion Record” and “Department Card” respectively. The cards at no time should be separated from each other. General instructions for the processing of the three-part card, also called the record card, are printed on the reverse side of the three-part card.

The record card has several boxes to be used in making out cards for new members, correcting continuous years of members, correcting a changed or misspelled name or correcting the war era. Procedures on making these changes are found later in this manual. The membership card should not be used to correct an address. A member data form should be completed for this purpose. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)

- ❖ **Membership ID Number** - Every member that gets a pre-printed card is assigned a 9-digit identification number, which will stay with the person as long as dues are paid continuously without a disruption in membership. Even if a person transfers from one post to another, and proper transfer procedures are followed, this ID number remains with the member. For this reason, it is most important to complete an official transfer using the member data form. This **will prevent** a duplicate record on national's data system and all the other problems that will arise as a result of the duplicate record. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)

The official membership ID number is printed in four places on the pre-printed three-part record card. It is printed twice on the left section, and once each on the other two sections. (See later example of the preprinted record card). This ID number is the most important feature in identifying the member from all other American Legion members and should be used whenever you call or write to department or national concerning a member. Use the 9-digit identification number to help ensure that the correct member's problems or issues are handled quickly and accurately.

- ❖ **Name of Post** - For technical reasons, it is not feasible for national headquarters to print the name of your post on the member card (right portion of the three-part preprinted record card). A line is provided so the name may be stamped, typed or printed on the card by the post adjutant or authorized post officer. The line below the member's name will have printing on it when received from national; this is the space where the post name may be added.
- ❖ **Scan Line** - When the left section (national's portion) of the record card is processed through the scanner equipment at national headquarters the primary line scanned is noted on the sample card...these are the series of numbers and characters "A" – "F." Never change or mark over this area. Marks of any kind can cause scanning errors in processing.

Pre-printed Card Information Explained

The image shows three versions of the 2007 The American Legion membership card. The first is a 'Department Card 2007' with fields for membership ID (900000024), department (A), post (9999), and continuous years (29). It includes checkboxes for war eras (WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Panama, etc.) and a section for name and address. The second is a standard card with similar fields but without the department-specific header. The third is a card featuring a photograph of a member, with the same data fields and a star indicating continuous years.

A/B/C/D/E/F – The characters that appear here make up the SCAN line. Do not change any of the information on this line. Do not mark in this area for any reason.

A – This is the permanent 9-digit Member ID Number– it will stay the same as long as the member continues to pay dues annually or for life.

B – This number represents the membership year.

C – These positions identify the department, post, and sometimes the country membership is in.

D – These numbers serve as a counter – for example, if your post has 195 pre-printed cards for members from last year, and you get an extra 25 blank cards (use for new members), the first card will have a 6-digit sequence number of 000001 and the last card will have 000220.

E – This variable number has importance only to national’s scanning equipment.

F – All American Legion cards have an “L,” and the SAL cards carry an “S.”

G – Only the first war era a member served is indicated on left and middle sections of the card.

H – Anytime a war era is to be updated or changed, this box must be marked on both sections.

I – Anytime the continuous years or the member’s name is to be changed, this box must be marked. The correct information is to be entered in the same space provided for the name/continuous years...correct both sections.

J – City location of the post.

- MEMBERSHIP REGISTER - Post Membership Roster Explained, Blank Cards, Renewal, New and Replacement Card processing, Correcting Information and Transmittal of Membership** -When you receive the cards, you also receive a “Membership Register.” The membership register is double-spaced between each record and is composed of one or more printed sheets. The register will be listed in alphabetical order of all your previous year’s members whose cards were received at national before April 1. The register may also include the names of members who paid dues in previous years, but did not pay for the most-recent year at the time of printing the register. Their “expired” records are still on national’s data system. You can easily identify these records by reviewing the column headed “Last Paid Year” on the left side of the register.

Special attention is called to the last five columns. Data in one or more of these columns is explained in the following example:

Post Membership Roster Explained

THE AMERICAN LEGION MEMBERSHIP REGISTER																
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY	YR					
DATE		LAST	POST NO.	DEPT. NO.	MEMBERSHIP	DEPARTMENT NAME	POST LOCATION	POST	ST	DAY						

CER FLAG – A number code here will show if a member has had a 50, 60, 70, 75 or 80-year continuous membership certificate printed. Only the most recent certificate code will be reflected.

EX FLAG – A “C” code means the member will not receive a dues renewal notice. If a “D” code appears, the member will not receive a renewal notice or a magazine from national.

ERA – This code identifies the war era on file at national for the member, showing the first war era the member served. Many members served in more than one war era, but only the first one is recorded in National’s data system. War era corrections should be reported on the member’s membership card and forwarded to the department headquarters, or on a member data form. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)

TY – The “Type” code identifies one of four types of life membership; all members reflecting a type code on the registers are automatically excluded from receiving a dues renewal notice. Those codes are:

“H” – this indicates the member has received an honorary life membership from the post; the post is responsible for payment of the member’s annual dues.

“L” – this indicates a department life member in Kansas, since this department does not participate in national’s Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) program. Several other departments have also administered their own life membership programs in the past, however, they have since joined national’s PUFL program; some membership rosters may still reflect “L” coded members in those departments.

“P” – this indicates the member is a Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) member.

“*” (asterisk) – this indicates “Honorary PUFL.” This is a new code added to indicate members who have received a PUFL membership as recognition or award from their post. This is the same as an honorary life membership, except by purchasing a PUFL membership; the post has removed the responsibility of ensuring payment of annual dues for the member. This option has been added to the revised (2009) PUFL application form.

SEQUENCE NO. – This 6-digit number, which is also printed on the card, can help the post find the card or the member’s name on the roster. This is an alternative to using the “alphabetical” look-up.

Note: The name field allows for the printing of a SUFFIX (such as Jr., Sr., etc).

- **Extra (Blank) Cards** - Every post receives a pre-determined percentage of blank cards in addition to the pre-printed ones. If you run out, request additional ones from the department headquarters. The blank cards are to be used for new members and providing duplicate or replacement cards. Refer to the information provided later in this section for complete information on processing new or replacement cards.
- **Handling a Renewal Membership - After a member pays his or her dues, locate their 3-part membership card and:**
 - 1) Fill in the date paid on the center section.
 - 2) Put your initials on the center section next to “date paid” line.
 - 3) Sign the member’s official card on the line reserved for the authorized officer.
 - 4) Place an ☒ in the “Renewal Box” in the upper right of the center section.
 - 5) Separate the member’s card from the left and center sections (keep together). These go to the department. Give or mail the card to the member promptly.
 - 6) Find the member’s name on the membership register, which is in alphabetical order, and mark the date paid in the column set aside for this purpose – extreme left column.

Except for the important job of transmitting the dues and the left and center sections of the card to the department headquarters, which is explained later, this completes your record keeping for a renewal member. Changing addresses, etc., is also described later.

- **Handling New Members - Always ask a prospective member if he/she currently belongs or has recently been a member.**

These instructions on the processing of new members also apply to:

- Transfers, for whom there is no pre-printed membership card and
- Any renewal, if for any reason, you did not receive a pre-printed card.

When a new member pays dues for the current year, take the first blank card from those supplied from your department. The serial number printed on the card will be the 6-digit sequence number, explained earlier in this manual. Once the card is processed at national headquarters, the member will be assigned a permanent 9-digit number that will appear on all future cards, mailings and documents.

Type or print on the left and center card sections the following information:

- Membership ID No. – same as the 6-digit sequential no. “*”
- First name, middle initial, last name of new member.
- Mailing address.
- City, state, zip code.
- Years of continuous membership (one year for a new member).
- War Era (first war era served).

“*” A person who transfers should be able to provide their permanent 9-digit ID number.

Put an ☒ in the proper box in the upper center of the card to show renewal, new or a transfer.

Put the date and your initials on the line on the upper-center portion to validate the card. If membership records are handled by an officer other than the post adjutant, the initials of the designated officer, such as the 1st vice commander or finance officer, are acceptable.

Type or print the member’s name on the first line of the official membership card (right side), just above the words “The above member has paid dues for (year) in the post indicated.” If the number of the post has not been pre-printed, enter the post number. If possible, type all information. On the second line of the official membership card, you may wish to type or stamp the post name.

Next line, if not already pre-printed, enter the city of the post and sign the official membership card.

Enter the number of years of continuous membership at the top of the official membership card. A new member paying dues for the first time should be credited with one year of membership. Also, be sure to enter the number of years in the appropriate boxes on the left and center sections. Be sure to fill out all sections of the three-part card. Please do not change, strike over or mark out any of the numbers printed on the cards. Follow this rule when making cards for new and renewal members.

When transferring a current-year paid member, use the member data form only and issue them a current year card. Discard the department and national portions of the three-part card. We advise you to make a notation on the membership register so you and anyone else who handles the cards and register will have a written record of your actions. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)

On the register, find the same number printed on the right side corresponding to the serial number on the card you have just made out for the new, renewed or transferred member. Opposite this number, in the columns provided for this purpose, add the member’s name, address, city, state, zip, continuous years and war era.

If, for some reason, you do not receive a pre-printed card for one or more members, make out a blank card for the member who belonged last year. Record the name, address and member ID number in exactly the same way as it was previously reported. Credit the member with the proper number of years.

- **Replacement Membership Card** - If it is necessary to provide a replacement card, the post can provide the replacement card by using one of the blank stocks provided. When it is necessary to provide a replacement card, you should report this to the department in case they expect an accounting of every card used. On the membership register, make a notation as a written record of your action.

- **Department Record Replica** - There may be times when the left and center section of the 3-part card is lost or destroyed. If this happens, the post will now provide a replica of this card by using one of its blank cards. When it is necessary to use a blank card for this purpose, it should be reported to your department headquarters, in the event they require the post to account for how, when and why every card is used. In preparing a replica card to transmit and forward to your department headquarters, you should take the first blank available from the supply provided, and type it to show, as much as possible, the same information as it appears on the original card. We advise you to make a notation on the membership register so you and anyone else who handles the cards and register will have a written record of your actions.
- **If You Run Out Of Membership Cards** - Every post is provided extra cards to be used for the purposes noted previously, but if this supply isn't enough, you may request additional cards from your department. If it is necessary to ask for additional cards, they will not have the number of your post pre-printed on them. You will have to type the post number on all three sections of the card when it is issued. You should also receive new membership register sheets listing the sequential number of the cards. In all instances, write the member's name and address on the membership register in order to have an accurate record of the membership.
- **If Duplicate Cards Are Received** - You might receive more than one pre-printed card for the same member. If this happens, process one of the cards as usual. On the other card, put an ☒ in the box next to "Duplicate" in the lower right of the department record. Return all three parts of the card to your department. Strike the duplicate name off your membership register and note in the allotted space that the card was returned.
- **If A Member Has Died** - If you receive a card pre-printed for a member who has died, put an ☒ in the box opposite the word "**Deceased**" in the lower right corner of the left section. Return the entire card to your department. Note on the membership register that the member is deceased and the card was returned.

If a member dies after dues have already been transmitted, notice of the fact should be reported on a member data form. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*) Deaths can also be reported using a post card or letter, but should include the name, ID number and last known address. Send the information to your department. Don't assume your department headquarters knows the member is deceased. National mails dues renewals periodically to unpaid members. Report deaths as soon as possible so they can be removed from the mailing in order to avoid any discomfort for the family.

- **If You Receive Cards In Error** - If your department audits your cards and you receive a card pre-printed for someone who is not a member of your post and is unknown to your post, write "Unknown" across the left section. Return the entire 3-part card to your department. Note on the membership register that the post does not know the person, and the card was returned to the department. Your post might receive cards that should go to another post. If this should occur, please send them to the department with a separate note explaining the return. Do not mark on any of the cards.
- **If A Member's Name Is Misspelled** - If a member's name is spelled incorrectly, use a # 2 pencil and put an ☒ in the box provided on the left section of the 3-part card. For the correction to be effective, a # 2 pencil should be used. Put a line through the misspelled information and enter the corrected name below the pre-printed name on the left and middle sections of the 3-part card. The corrected information should be typed.

- **Continuous Membership** - The pre-printed cards you receive should show the number of years of continuous membership for each member. The figure is advanced one year when the cards are printed (if the member's record has been processed before April 1).

If the correct years are not on the card, or if they are missing altogether, put an ☒ using a # 2 pencil in the correction box in the left section of the 3-part card. Strike out the incorrect number and enter the right information on all parts of the card...also correct the membership register.

If it should be necessary to correct the number of years of continuous membership after the card has been transmitted, send the member data form to effect the change. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)

- **Transmitting Membership** - Your department headquarters will give you specific instructions on how dues are to be transmitted. Although there is a perforation between the left and center sections of the card, do not separate these two sections. Both sections must be sent intact to the department.

On a regular basis (at least weekly) send to your department all completed cards for which dues have been received, including renewals, new and transferred members. Send the payment along with the cards to your department.

If entire cards for deceased, unknown or duplicate members are being sent to the department at the same time, keep these separate from the renewals for which you are sending along payment.

Write or stamp the date the dues were transmitted in the column headed "Date Transmitted" on your membership register. If entire cards for deceased, unknown or duplicate members are returned, note the date returned on your membership register as well.

- **Filing Your Membership Register For Historic Reference** - To keep your membership register in order and to preserve it from dirt and wear, we urge you to keep the sheets in a loose-leaf binder. There are probably several different types of binders you can buy locally, but binders especially adapted to the membership register are also available from National Emblem Sales. Check the current catalog for sizes and prices.

The average post will be able to keep its membership registers for several years in the same binder. We suggest when the binder becomes too thick for easy handling, the older registers be removed from the loose-leaf binder and permanently bound in hard covers. Larger cities will have a bookbinder that can do this for a reasonable cost. Posts in smaller towns can check with the nearest public library or school to find the location of a reliable bookbinder.

Keeping all previous years membership registers is a good practice. They are your historical record of past membership and your post's history. Past membership registers are also good lead generators for potential members when your post does a membership recruiting drive.

- **Supplemental Cards/Rosters** - Routinely, the membership cards and rosters for the next year are printed by national in early April, and sent to departments for distribution to their various posts. Time and place for post distribution is at the discretion of each department. For the balance of the year, until the April-cycle rolls back around, activity changes for Legion members continue to happen. In order to help the post adjutant stay informed, national provides periodic updates.

Because many members still join for the current year in the spring (between April and June), national provides supplemental post cards and rosters for this period. These are printed in July, and

sent to the respective departments for further distribution. If the post believes they should have gotten this information, and has not received it by the end of August, it is suggested the post contact the department for an explanation. Any cards included would be for those who joined since the pre-printed cards/rosters were done earlier in April.

The information on the printouts relate to the codes in the far-right column with a further description in the legend provided at the end of the roster...they cover new members, address changes, deceased members, and membership transfers (in and out). The overall schedule is as follows:

- ◆ **April** Initial rosters and cards printed for next membership year.
- ◆ **July** New members' cards since April and roster to include all changes from April to July.
- ◆ **October** Changes since July (roster only).
- ◆ **January** Changes since October (roster only).

Note: Only the first (April) roster will contain the full membership; subsequent rosters will be limited to changes for the time period indicated.

- **Honorary Membership** – Honorary, associate, social or guest memberships in The American Legion are not legal. As provided in the Constitution and By-Laws, “There shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership,” Article IV, Section 2. This is not to be confused with “Honorary Life” membership explained below.
- **Honorary Life Membership** – Almost since the founding of The American Legion in 1919, posts have recognized their outstanding members for exceptional service or accomplishment by awarding what is known as an “Honorary Life” membership. Various metal life membership cards and other items can be purchased from National Emblem Sales. Your department may have rules pertaining to the granting of this type of membership. The post assumes the responsibility of seeing the yearly dues are paid annually for the remainder of the member's life. Important Note: New and even longtime experienced officers sometimes overlook honorary life members at dues paying time, which may result in a membership lapse. It's embarrassing to everyone to have to explain to an honorary life member why he or she is no longer a member of The American Legion. To avoid this ever happening, perhaps it may be better for the post to purchase a Paid-Up-For-Life membership (see PUFL, below).
- **No Bill for Honorary Life or Paid-Up-For-Life Members** – Post(s) do not need to request a “C” code (No Bill) for a Paid-Up-For-Life or honorary life members; a code is automatically added to the member's record so dues renewals will not be sent. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)
- **Paid- Up-For-Life (PUFL) - Cost, Definition of Program, “Branch of Service” Plastic Card and Time Payment Plan** – The program started with the 1976 membership year as a convenience for Legionnaires, offering them a method to purchase a membership for life, through a one-time payment. In any given year over 150,000 Legionnaires have taken advantage of this opportunity, and enrolled by switching from annual dues-paying members to Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) members.

Every veteran has a personal reason for becoming a Legionnaire. Those willing to become a PUFL member are offering somewhat more than the usual amount of enthusiasm, dedication, and love for country. Each is sacrificing hard-earned dollars for a lifetime pledge to the goals, objectives and ideals upon which The American Legion was founded. They are betting the Legion's future will be

just as bright as its past accomplishments, and that continued service to veterans is synonymous with the organization's commitment for "Still Serving America."

- ❖ Cost of A PUFL Membership - The cost of a Paid-Up-For-Life membership is based on the member's age at the time of application and the current annual dues of the post. The fee is computed by multiplying the annual dues by the factor shown under the appropriate age group. The full fee schedule is printed on the back of the applications, which are available from the department headquarters and on-line at www.legion.org.

A Legionnaire must be in good standing to become a Paid-Up-For-Life member. To be in good standing, the member must have a valid membership card for the current American Legion year. The average Legionnaire is most likely to decide to become a lifetime member at the time when dues are paid for the coming year. Post commanders, adjutants, and membership workers are asked to make sure their members know that with one payment they can take care of dues for all future years.

The National Constitution & By-Laws of The American Legion is clear that "there shall be no form or class of membership except an active membership, and dues shall be paid annually or for life." This is not a discount program and thus the rates are established to ensure the PUFL trust fund is able to fund the membership per capita for posts, department and national in the out years and based on life expectancy.

The post will receive an annual amount for each Paid-Up-For-Life member equal to the post portion at the time the member became a lifetime member. Depending on the dues of the post, this amount can be different from one member to another.

An applicant may pay by check, MasterCard, VISA, American Express or Discover Card or by time payment (described later in this manual). Do not send cash through the mail.

Many posts purchase a Paid-Up-For-Life membership for their long-time members, and in calculating the cost to remit, the authorizing post officers may choose to leave out all or a portion of their share of the dues...this will reduce the amount to submit with the application. A post can authorize this for an applicant...there is a line on the application for this purpose.

If the member has paid "dues in advance" to the post, the dues amount may be deducted from the total fee, provided the PUFL application is received at national prior to January 1st, the commencement of the new membership year. For example, if a member pays \$25.00 for his/her 2013 dues in August and then decides to purchase a PUFL membership in November, he/she can deduct \$25.00 from the total PUFL fee due as long as the PUFL application and full payment is received at National Headquarters by 12/31/2012. It is the responsibility of the post to ensure the dues are deducted prior to submitting the application and PUFL fee. This deduction should be noted in the top margin on the front of the PUFL application.

Should a PUFL member hold membership in a post whose charter has been canceled and the member is unable to complete a transfer due to circumstances beyond his/her control, then the unused portion of the original PUFL fee will be refunded. The same rule will apply in the case of a member whose membership has been revoked by the post. Except as stated, no refunds of PUFL membership fees will be made.

- ❖ Items for Purchase - A number of items can be purchased to show personal pride as a Paid-Up-For-Life member. Check the current catalog of National Emblem Sales for price and availability. One of these items is a metal lifetime card, along the lines of the gold or silver honorary life card. It is stock number 722.104 @ \$14.95...it is an engraved copper wallet card, and can be purchased by any certified PUFL member.

National Emblem Sales has also developed other items: a lapel pin, an attachment tab, an auto license plate, a PUFL cap pin, a PUFL cloth cap insignia and a PUFL baseball cap. These unique items have been designed to enhance the fundamental value of a lifetime membership and to demonstrate your pride in being a Paid-Up-For-Life member of The American Legion.

- ❖ **PUFL Membership Card**-- Each Paid-Up-For-Life member receives a permanent plastic card, as well as an annual paper membership card, directly from National, to verify continuing membership in The American Legion. The annual card will be mailed to the member in June or July of each year. Upon request, a replacement plastic or paper card can be provided at no additional charge to the Paid-Up-For-Life member.
- ❖ **“Branch of Service” Plastic Cards**-- Each Paid-Up-For-Life member receives a unique plastic membership card reflecting which military Branch of Service the veteran served. There is no cost to the member. A total of six Branch of Service cards have been developed; one each for veterans of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and a generic type for those requesting one (or not identifying their branch of service). Applicants are able to select their Branch of Service card simply by checking the proper box on the PUFL application. Only one type of card per applicant will be produced.
- ❖ **Time Payment Option**--Members of The American Legion may use the time payment plan to purchase a Paid-Up-For-Life membership. No interest and no service charge will be added. Time payment plan instructions/established rules for application:
 - 1) The member must be in good standing. This means the member must have a paid membership card for the current Legion year.
 - 2) The total Paid-Up-For-Life membership fee has to be paid within thirty-five (35) months after the application is processed at National and consecutive monthly payments are to be maintained.
 - 3) When application is submitted to the post for certification, an initial remittance must accompany the application. The payment should be at least the cost of one monthly payment of the total fee.
 - 4) On the application, please check the use of the Time Payment Plan. Until the full payment is received, the member will receive an annual card with the notation of “Time Payment.”
 - 5) Delinquent accounts may be closed with or without notice to the member.
 - 6) National headquarters will provide coupons to be used for submitting monthly payments to national headquarters until the entire Paid-Up-For-Life fee is paid-in-full. Do not submit monthly payments to the post or department; mail directly to national headquarters. National is not responsible for misdirected or lost payments.
 - 7) A permanent Paid-Up-For-Life membership card will only be issued after the total fee is paid in full. For assistance or any questions, please contact your post adjutant or finance officer, or write: The American Legion, National Paid-Up-For-Life Plan, and P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.
- ❖ **Further PUFL Information/Assistance** - For further information regarding National’s PUFL time payment membership plan, you can contact your department headquarters, or call National Headquarters (317) 630-1221.

SECTION IV – MYLEGION.ORG

- **MYLEGION for Post Officers-** The American Legion National Headquarters has designed a secure internet site to assist Post Officers in their day-to-day membership processing duties. All features included with myLegion are below and are available to the post at **NO CHARGE**. To register for myLegion posts must first complete and submit an authorization form available at www.myLegion.org.

- **Membership Tools**
 - View member information for post and squadron data.
 - Track members who have renewed online.
 - Submit Member Data Form changes electronically with the exception of adding new members, processing renewals and transferring members. Those 3 processes must continue to be transmitted to the department. All member data changes submitted electronically through the myLegion site are submitted to your department headquarters in a weekly file from national. Thus eliminating the need to complete or mail paper forms for address changes, phone number updates, deceased notifications, etc.
 - Generate rosters for current, expired, deceased and undeliverable members. Data is also available in CSV file format allowing users to work with the data in other applications.
 - Submit Consolidated Post Report electronically.
 - Search for Headquarters Post and Expired members in a specified area to help you grow your post membership.

- **Get Connected**
 - Communicate with your members by publishing post announcements, images, calendar events and newsletters. These publications can be viewed by members of your post registered as a myLegion member and also on the Post Locator at www.legion.org.
 - Join the Officer's only chat forum to discuss membership ideas and issues that face today's veterans.

- **Manuals and Brochures**
 - Download Post Officer's Manual, Adjutant's Manual and other publications that are vital to your day-to-day operations.
 - Promote The American Legion to your community. Available are brochures such as National Family Week, Temporary Financial Assistance, Family Support Network, and more.
 - Print suggested speeches prepared by National Headquarters' staff for Pearl Harbor Day, Veteran's Day, American Legion Birthday, Flag Day, and Memorial Day.
 - Access The American Legion Dispatch electronically.

- **Site Security**
 - MyLegion.org is a secure site that requires a user name and password to access. The site is registered using the post adjutant's information we have on file at National Headquarters. If the user name or password is lost or forgotten that information will only be provided to the post adjutant. It is the adjutant's responsibility to provide user name and password information to only trusted sources.

SECTION V – National Emergency Fund (NEF)

- **Eligibility, How to Apply, Contributions and Providing Assistance to Your Members and Community** – The National Emergency Fund program is one of the most visible illustrations of “veterans helping veterans” that The American Legion has to offer. Ever since this program was reestablished in 1989, this no-strings attached disaster relief program has helped thousands of American Legion members and their families to recover from declared natural disasters.

It is important for every post officer to understand how to prepare for these disasters so that your American Legion post can provide immediate and responsive care to your affected members.

Eligibility - There are no premiums to pay into the program. It is a grant to the legion member in need. The only requirements on behalf of the legion member are:

- Must be a current year paid member of The American Legion, Auxiliary or SAL.
- Must be a member in good standing with their post, unit or squadron.
- Must have been a current member prior to the date of disaster.
- Must be a declared natural disaster by a government authority (national, state or county).
- Must be temporary or permanently displaced from residence.
- Must be submitted within 90 days of disaster.

Only one grant per household can be considered. The National Emergency Fund does not cover damages to automobiles, outbuildings (such as sheds and barns), and apartments or to businesses. Nor is the NEF program to take the place of, or supplement, insurance compensation. It is only meant to assist our members if they lose, or are displaced from, their homes due to a declared natural disaster. Subsequently, incidents stemming from accidental fires in the home or faulty structural damages do not fall within the confines of the NEF. The key here is "declared natural disasters," which displace our members from their homes.

American Legion posts are eligible to receive grants from this fund, if damaged by declared natural disaster. The application must be supported by substantiating documentation that the post will cease to perform programs and activities in the community due to losses sustained.

How To Apply-- NEF grant applications may be obtained by contacting department headquarters or by calling The American Legion National Headquarters at (317) 630-1205 or visiting www.legion.org/emergency. The application contains instructions explaining what information is required.

The turnaround time for a National Emergency Fund grant depends on how soon the completed application is received at The American Legion National Headquarters, located in Indianapolis, Indiana.

At the very minimum, the NEF application should include:

- Copies of estimates of damage.
- Photographs of the damage or statements from pos/district/department headquarters.
- Description of loss and length of displacement.
- Temporary housing costs such as rental, motel, hotel costs
- Any other supporting documentation.

Failure to include all the required information could delay the processing of the grant. All supporting documentation and photographs provided in support of the grant application cannot be returned.

Once the grant application is completed it must be forwarded to the department headquarters where the grant applications are reviewed and damages are assessed. The department commander and adjutant determine the grant amount. The amount of the grant is not to exceed \$1,500 for individuals and \$5,000 for posts. The department commander and adjutant sign the grant application and then forward it to national headquarters. National headquarters makes the final approval and a check is then issued to that Legion member or post and forwarded to their respective department headquarters for distribution by their leadership.

Contributions - Since October 1989, the NEF program has provided over \$9,000,000 in direct financial assistance to American Legion family members and posts. All contributions made to this fund are distributed directly to the Legion member in need. There are no administrative or fulfillment costs. Every dollar raised goes into a special account and the funds are used solely to assist our members and American Legion posts in need.

The contributions from Legionnaires, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion members, has enabled thousands of American Legion family members to rebuild their homes and lives and has kept American Legion posts from closing. For more information regarding how to donate or how your post can contribute, visit www.legion.org/emergency.

Be Prepared! Take A Proactive Stance-- The post officers are the first lines of assistance to our members when a disaster hits. You are the ones to be on site to provide comfort and to initiate the NEF process. The NEF program is an excellent opportunity for post officers to pre-position their posts to provide immediate support as soon as the disaster occurs. This proactive stance involves learning as much as you can and making plans to act. It not only allows you to provide the service needed in your member's time of need, but also allows you to develop partnerships with other agencies within your community to assist one another when disaster strikes.

- Know where your members are! Take a look at your membership by addresses and zip codes and plot your membership on a map. That will provide you with a visual overview of where your people are located. Keep the members' addresses and their phone numbers current.
- Educate your post officers on NEF and how the process works. This should be done at the new officer orientation each year.
- Network with disaster relief agencies and key community players. There are several agencies within every community that provide initial disaster response and subsequent disaster relief. Within this network you should:
- Make a contact list, complete with names, phone numbers and addresses. This list can serve as a quick reference for your officers and members when a natural disaster hits the community. These contacts should include at the very minimum the Red Cross, Federal Management Agency (FEMA), local civil defense units, national guard and reserve units, county and local law enforcement, fire departments and emergency medical services (EMS).
- Participate in disaster relief training sessions whenever possible. Federal, state and local emergency disaster training opportunities can be an investment in providing that immediate response to our Legionnaires. Have the agency head inquire if anyone working there is a Legionnaire who can assist in connecting the post with him or her.
- Educate your community about NEF. Do not wait for the severe weather season to hit. Start now on educating your community on NEF and the needs of our Legionnaires when a disaster strikes. Hold NEF information meetings at the post and invite the media to attend. Canned news releases on NEF can be obtained through your department headquarters or through the national headquarters.

- Develop a contingency plan to provide immediate support. Before the NEF grant request is even filled out, immediate assistance may be needed. Medical attention, temporary living accommodations, food and water, immediate financial emergencies or even emotional reassurance are but a few of the necessities that follow a natural disaster. The American Legion post and those officers who operate that wonderful facility can provide temporary relief on the spot if proper planning is initiated.
- Meet with your executive board and/or general membership to determine what resources can be provided prior to a natural disaster hitting your area. These resources can include:
 - bottled water, ready to eat meals
 - flares, candles / matches, first aid kits
 - blankets, cots and sleeping bags
 - basic clothing needs (undergarments, socks)
 - infant needs (Pampers, Enfamil and other infant formulas)
 - toiletries (deodorants, soaps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shaving cream and razors)

Other contingency items to consider include temporarily turning the post into a shelter. Your executive committee can look at alternatives to normal post activities until the crisis is over and your Legionnaires are able to return to their homes, or can link up with relatives or friends.

Discuss with the executive committee and your membership who is going to do what when the disaster strikes. For instance, the adjutant may report as soon as possible to set up the post as a shelter. The commander may report to the command post while the first vice and other officers split up and visit Legionnaires who live in their sector of town. If possible, and only if cleared by the authorities, venture out to their areas to see if any of our members need our assistance. Bring a camera along, as our Legionnaires may be in a position where they do not have access to one.

A natural disaster leaves its mark not only on the landscape but also on the individual's psyche for the rest of their lives. Wouldn't it be wonderful for part of that lasting impression to be of The American Legion being there for them in their time of need? Take the time, do some planning and get into position to help our Legionnaires before, during and after the NEF cycle.

SECTION VI – TRAINING– (American Legion Extension Institute)

- **Extension Institute, American Legion (ALEI)** – Each post should encourage its members to learn as much as possible about the history of The American Legion. This will ensure they know where we've been, where we currently are and where we are going as an organization, as well as lay the groundwork for developing new current and future leaders.

In March of 2012, the Internal Affairs and Magazine Divisions developed an entirely rewritten, online version of the ALEI. The idea of the online course, and soon to be developed booklet form, is to educate and empower the new or inactive American Legion family member. This interactive, multimedia training tool will provide every member an opportunity to learn and discover the rich history, programs, policies, developments, positions and goals of our organization.

This 90 minute course composed of 6 modules: History and Organization, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, Children & Youth with a Course wrap-up and a comprehensive final exam, is developed around the Four Pillars of what The American Legion was founded on. Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's veterans, its servicemembers, their families, the youth of America and ordinary citizens.

If you are interested in knowing more about The American Legion and how you can become involved, go to legion.org/alei or visit your mylegion.org and for a modest fee of \$4.95 for Legion Family members, and \$9.95 for non-Legion Family members, you can become empowered with the knowledge to become a leader in The American Legion. The American Legion is the nation's largest and most influential network of U.S. wartime veterans, families and communities, and The American Legion Extension Institute helps bring all this together in one simple to use program.

SECTION VII - Reconnect

- **Reconnect - Definition and Current Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)** – Reconnecting America with her military was the driving force behind the Department of Defense establishing a reconnect program several years ago. There was a perception America had lost touch with her fighting force of men and women. The American Legion was tasked with leading the way in rekindling that relationship. It is important to note that the Department of Defense has reconstituted the old “Reconnect” program and are now calling it “Operation Tribute to Freedom.” Information about the program can be found at their web site: **www.defendamerica.mil**.

The Reconnect program has been a great success in many departments. Relationships are being formulated with many Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve Units. Visits and activities are continuing to flourish on active duty installations and with every conceivable portion of the total force. Local recruiting stations are still a viable source to get involved.

Reconnect events can take many forms. Visiting Active Duty installations are the largest events, but simply visiting a local recruiting office, National Guard or Reserve Unit, local military entrance processing station, or even a welcome home event, serves to reconnect local communities with their military. If your post wishes to get involved with the Reconnect program, and/or needs assistance, contact your department headquarters.

- **Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)** - The American Legion has signed a MOU with the **United States Military Entrance Processing Command (USMEPCOM)**. This will help to establish contact with the 62 Military Entrance Processing Stations around the country. A list of MEP stations, and a copy of this memorandum can be requested through the Department from National Headquarters, Internal Affairs Division.

A MOU with the **United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)** has been in effect for several years. This MOU informs all levels of USAREC and The American Legion about our partnership and details ways we can assist. A list of Army Recruiting Commands and a copy of this MOU can be requested through the department from national headquarters, Internal Affairs Division.

The newest MOU was signed with the **United States Army Reserve Command (USARC)** and it reaffirms both organizations' commitment to the American Soldier, their families and veterans alike. The MOU allows for open communication between the two groups and encourages American Legion posts to get involved with their local reserve centers. Essentially it is an extension of a Reserve Unit's Family Support or Readiness Group. A list of United States Army Reserve Armories can be found in your local White Pages or by contacting your department headquarters.

Reconnecting can have positive results - Service first, Membership second.

SECTION VIII - Resolutions

- **RESOLUTION** - If you have an idea that will improve The American Legion, put that idea into words, in the form of a resolution. First have it passed by your local post; then, have it passed by your district at its annual convention. All resolutions passed at a district convention are delivered to the resolutions committee at the following department convention. At the department convention, you should appear before the resolutions committee and plead for the passage of your resolution, and you should also be prepared to speak for its passage when it comes on the floor of the department convention. All resolutions pertaining to national, passed at the department are forwarded to National. (For more information regarding resolutions see the *Resolution Booklet* at www.legion.org/publications.)

Because resolutions adopted by your membership represent formal expressions of the official opinion or will of the post, extreme care should be devoted to both their preparation and thought content. The following guidelines and suggestions relate primarily to the *form* your post's resolutions should take, rather than their content. However, when considering resolutions, keep in mind that any proposal transmitted beyond your post and within the organization of the Legion must be "germane"—that is, closely related to the purpose for which The American Legion exists.

Resolutions requiring county, district or department consideration must be prepared and forwarded in accordance with their respective regulations and by-laws. A well-written resolution stands a better chance of getting favorable consideration at your county, district, or department convention than a resolution that is vaguely worded, poorly documented and carelessly formulated.

From the standpoint of the policies and practices of The American Legion as a whole, resolutions are all-important. The national organization cannot act on a given problem in the absence of a controlling resolution; and, conversely, it must act on a matter when mandated to do so by a resolution that has been properly adopted by the national convention or National Executive Committee. If your post seeks to be a leader in the policies and practices of The American Legion, it can do so only through the resolution process.

In some posts, the member who moves the adoption of a resolution must present it in writing at the time the motion is offered. Other posts follow the practice of assigning one member, or special committee, the task of drafting/editing those resolutions to be sent forward for convention consideration. However, it remains the responsibility of the post commander to make sure each resolution truly reflects the sense of the action taken by the post—and is presented in the best possible form.

Except for certain details (see the Officers Guide) the national organization has not established an official style guide for the preparation of American Legion resolutions. However, the National Executive Committee (NEC) has expressed (Res. No. 20 and 21, May 1960) certain general considerations are applicable to all resolutions being forwarded for action by the National organization as follows:

1. A resolution should contain "supporting documents," and its intent should be clearly defined.
2. A resolution should be free of errors of fact and law.
3. A resolution should have material relevance to the aims and purposes of The American Legion. (On the latter point, the NEC specifically cautions American Legion posts to beware of becoming a channel through which non-Legion organizations seek to achieve their goals.)

A resolution should deal with only one subject. Those that attempt to treat more than one subject are unwieldy to process at conventions, especially if they involve matters that do not fall within the jurisdiction of a single committee of the convention. They are generally rejected or amended to delete reference to more than one subject.

SECTION IX – Post Service Officer

- **Service Officer, Post** - Veterans needing assistance with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other military-related matters, often turn to The American Legion for help. For most veterans, the post in their community is “The American Legion,” not the national or department headquarters. This means that veterans needing help are going to look for it at the local post. This is especially true today with thousands of troops deploying to and returning from the war on terrorism.

If a veteran goes to a post for help and is turned away or treated with indifference, The American Legion, not the post, is seen as not caring about veterans, regardless of what The American Legion has done or is currently doing for veterans at the state and national levels. This is why it is so important every post has a Post Service Officer (PSO) truly interested in serving fellow veterans.

The PSO serves as the initial contact between The American Legion and the veteran. The PSO, in most instances, is not a professional service officer, nor is he or she an “accredited” representative of The American Legion (the exception would be when a professional service officer, county, state or Legion, also serves as the PSO for his or her post). It isn’t necessary for the PSO to be an expert in veterans’ law or benefits. What is important is for the PSO to have a strong desire to serve veterans.

The purpose of the PSO is to be an initial point of contact for veteran issues by providing veterans in the community where the post is located with basic information and assistance, including referrals to the Department Service Officer (DSO). It is important for the PSO to establish a working relationship with the professional American Legion DSO and ensure any paperwork submitted by the veteran is forwarded to the DSO in a timely manner.

PSO training is the responsibility of the department. PSOs should take advantage of all training opportunities. The National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission (VA&R) publishes a “Post Service Officer’s Guide” every year. This guide contains general VA-related information, including DSO contact information for every state, and is an excellent resource for the PSO. Guides are sent to the department adjutant for distribution to every post in his/her state. If you have not been receiving a PSO Guide, please contact your department adjutant. VA&R, located in the Washington, D.C. office, also provides numerous VA-related brochures for Post use, free of charge.

Relevant veteran-related information also can be found in the “Veterans” section of the Legion’s homepage, www.legion.org.

National VA&R Points of Contact

VA&R Policy & General Info.	VAR@legion.org or (202) 861-2700, Ext. 1400
VA Health Care or Hospital Issues	VAR@legion.org or (202) 861-2700, Ext. 1509
Environnemental Hazards (Gulf War, etc.)	Gulfwar@legion.org or (202) 861-2700, Ext. 1509
Military Discharge Upgrades	VAR@legion.org or (202) 861-2700, Ext. 1602
Claims Assistance/Service Officer	VAR@legion.org or 1-800-433-3318
Appealed Claims (Bureau Veteran Affairs)	VAR@legion.org or (202) 565-6324
Vet. Preference & Employment Issues	Econ@legion.org or (202) 861-2700, Ext. 1402
VA&R Brochures	VAR@legion.org or (202) 861-2700, Ext. 1601

SECTION X – Funeral Honors

- **Funeral Honors; “Honoring Those Who Served”** – The rendering of military funeral honors is a way to show the nation’s deep gratitude to those who, in time of war and peace, have faithfully defended our country. This ceremonial paying of respect is the final demonstration a grateful nation can provide to the veteran’s family. The web site “Military Funeral Honors” is sponsored by the Department of Defense and provides the general public with information on military funeral honors, as well as helpful links to related military and veteran’s issues Web sites. It also serves as a resource tool for our nation’s funeral directors as they assist veterans’ families in arranging for military funeral honors. (*visit www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil*)

Upon the family's request, the law requires that every eligible veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag along with the playing of Taps. The law defines a military funeral honors detail as consisting of two or more uniformed military persons with at least one member of the honor guard being from the veteran's parent branch of service of the armed forces.

The DOD program calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the veteran’s family. Veteran service organizations (VSOs) like The American Legion may assist in the implementation of military funeral honors. When military funeral honors at a national cemetery are desired, they are arranged prior to the committal service by the funeral home. A notice of at least 48 hours is required to organize the funeral honors detail.

The funeral director will assist you and answer your questions regarding grave markers. Family members can also write to the VA at:

Military Funeral Honors
10100 Reunion Place, Suite 260
San Antonio, TX 78216-4138

The *Officer’s Guide & Manual of Ceremonials* is also an excellent resource to use when your post wishes to form an honor guard or to use as a resource for funeral honors. Another excellent resource is any local post that currently has an honor guard. If you have any questions don’t hesitate to contact your department headquarters. They are probably your best resource.

SECTION XI – Magazine and Dispatch

- **Circulation Procedures - The American Legion Magazine** – Every member is entitled to a subscription to *The American Legion Magazine* for each year’s paid membership. There will not be a lapse in the subscription if the member’s card for the next year is transmitted promptly to department headquarters and reaches national’s data services section before the previous year’s subscription has expired. The following are ways to speed the delivery of the magazine:
 1. As soon as a member signs up, send the completed left and center sections of the card to the department headquarters. The department will then send it to national’s data services section.
 2. Type or print all required information on the card.
 3. Advise data entry immediately of a change of address by completing the Member Data Form. (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)
 4. Answer correspondence requesting subscription information as soon as possible.

HERE'S WHY...

- a) It takes up to 45 days to add a name to the mailing list. As many as 600,000 membership cards are received and processed for an issue. In order to meet mailing deadlines, closing dates for receiving cards are set from 30 to 45 days prior to these dates.
- b) It takes up to 60 days to change an address. An average of 50,000 changes of address notices are received for each issue. As with subscription cards, closing dates are established to meet deadlines.
- c) Complete information is required to enter a subscription. *The American Legion Magazine* is mailed 2nd class and, as a result, the list must be processed and maintained in strict accordance with U.S. postal laws and regulations and those of the Audit Bureau of Circulation. After receiving 12 issues a member will not get a magazine unless a new card is received.

- **Dispatch** – The *Dispatch* is a national newspaper published once a month, at an annual subscription rate of \$15; National American Legion Press Association members can subscribe at a \$6 annual rate. Complimentary subscriptions are sent to all posts through the post adjutant, who is strongly encouraged to share the publication with officers and other post members. Display it on your bulletin board or use excerpts in your own post newsletter. The *Dispatch* encourages departments and posts to reprint our articles; all we ask is to credit the *Dispatch* as the source of the information.

To ensure you receive timely delivery of the latest American Legion-related news to your home, write for personal subscription information to: The American Legion *Dispatch*, National Headquarters, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206; or call (317) 630-1352.

SECTION XII – Military Awards, Decorations and Military Records

- **Military Awards and Decorations** – The American Legion continually receives requests from Legionnaires and veterans about how to contact the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. These requests range from seeking information on lost records, military awards, decorations and requests for Standard Form 180 (SF 180). A blank SF 180 has been included on page 36 for your use.

Requests for the issuance or replacement of military service medals, decorations and awards should be directed to the specific branch of the military in which the veteran served. However, for Air Force (including Army Air Corps) and Army personnel, the National Personnel Records Center will verify the awards to which a veteran is entitled and forward the request with the verification to the appropriate service department for issuance of the medals.

Generally, there is no charge for medal or award replacements. The length of time to receive a response or your medals and awards varies depending upon the branch of service sending them. For more information on the National Archives and Records Administration, visit their web site at www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html or call (314) 801-0800.

Use their system to create a customized order form to request information for you, or your relative's, military personnel records. You may use the system if you are a military veteran or next of kin of a deceased, former member of the military. The next of kin can be a surviving spouse that has not remarried, father, mother, son, daughter, sister or brother.

If you are not the veteran or next of kin, you must complete the SF 180, (*see page 34 for a blank form*) obtained from the National Archives and Records Administration's web site. Please submit a separate request (either SF 180 or letter) for each individual whose records are being requested.

- **The Cold War Recognition Certificate** – The recognition certificate, signed by the current Secretary of Defense, is for all members of the armed forces and qualified federal government civilian personnel who faithfully and honorably served the United States anytime during the Cold War Era, defined as Sept. 2, 1945 to Dec. 26, 1991. The form can be accessed at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/tagd/coldwar/default.htm>.
- **Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC); *History, Administration, Eligibility and Application Process*** – An engraved paper certificate, signed by the current president, to honor the memory of honorably discharged deceased veterans.
 - **History** - This program was initiated in March 1962 by President John F. Kennedy and has been continued by all subsequent presidents. Statutory authority for the program is Section 112, Title 38, of the United States Code.
 - **Administration** - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers the PMC program by preparing the certificates, which bear the current president's signature expressing the country's grateful recognition of the veteran's service in the United States Armed Forces.
 - **Eligibility** - Eligible recipients include the deceased veteran's next of kin and loved ones. More than one certificate may be provided.
 - **Application Process** - Eligible recipients, or someone acting on their behalf, may apply for a PMC in person at any VA regional office or by U.S. mail only. Requests cannot be sent via email. There is no form to use when requesting a PMC. Please be sure to include a copy of the veteran's discharge and death certificate. Please submit copies only, as they cannot return original documents.

If you would like to request a Presidential Memorial Certificate, or if you requested one more than eight (8) weeks ago and have not received it yet, we ask that you either:

1. Fax your request and all supporting documents (copy of discharge and death certificate) to (202) 565-8054.
2. Mail your request and all supporting documents using either the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial mail service, such as one of the overnight or express mail delivery services, to:

Presidential Memorial Certificates (41A1C)
 Department of Veterans Affairs
 5109 Russell Road
 Quantico, VA 22134-3903

If you have questions about the certificate you have received, a request you have already sent in, or about the program in general, you may call (202) 565-4964.

- **Military Service Records and Medals** – The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, MO, houses most former service members military records and will replace lost or destroyed Discharge Certificates (WDAGO Form 53-55 or DD Form 214) and, if available, complete service and medical records.

The NPRC screens military records for requests for original and replacement awards, decorations and medals. If reflected in the service record, referral is made to the individual service department for issuance.

The NPRC will also provide medical emergency information from the service records at the following telephone number: 1-866-272-6272.

“Request Pertaining to Military Records” (Standard Form 180) is used to request service records and medals.

REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

To ensure the best possible service, please thoroughly review the accompanying instructions before filling out this form. Please print clearly or type. If you need more space, use plain paper.

SECTION I - INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much as possible.)

1. NAME USED DURING SERVICE (last, first, and middle)		2. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	3. DATE OF BIRTH	4. PLACE OF BIRTH	
5. SERVICE, PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that all service be shown below.)					
5. SERVICE, PAST AND PRESENT	BRANCH OF SERVICE	DATES OF SERVICE		CHECK ONE	SERVICE NUMBER DURING THIS PERIOD (If unknown, write "unknown")
		DATE ENTERED	DATE RELEASED	OFFICER	
a. ACTIVE SERVICE					
b. RESERVE SERVICE					
c. NATIONAL GUARD					
6. IS THIS PERSON DECEASED? If "YES" enter the date of death. <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES _____			7. IS (WAS) THIS PERSON RETIRED FROM MILITARY SERVICE? <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES		

SECTION II - INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

1. **REPORT OF SEPARATION** (DD Form 214 or equivalent). This contains information normally needed to verify military service. A copy may be sent to the veteran, the deceased veteran's next of kin, or other persons or organizations if authorized in Section III, below. NOTE: If more than one period of service was performed, even in the same branch, there may be more than one Report of Separation. Be sure to show EACH year that a Report of Separation was issued, for which you need a copy.

☐ An UNDELETED Report of Separation is requested for the year(s) _____

This normally will be a copy of the full separation document including such sensitive items as the character of separation, authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and dates of time lost. An undeleted version is ordinarily required to determine eligibility for benefits.

☐ A DELETED Report of Separation is requested for the year(s) _____

The following information will be deleted from the copy sent: authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and for separations after June 30, 1979, character of separation and dates of time lost.

2. **OTHER INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED** _____

3. **PURPOSE** (Optional - An explanation of the purpose of the request is strictly voluntary. Such information may help the agency answering this request to provide the best possible response and will in no way be used to make a decision to deny the request.) _____

SECTION III - RETURN ADDRESS AND SIGNATURE

1. **REQUESTER IS:**

☐ Military service member or veteran identified in Section I, above
☐ Next of kin of deceased veteran _____ (relation)

☐ Legal guardian (must submit copy of court appointment)

☐ Other (specify) _____

2. **SEND INFORMATION/DOCUMENTS TO:**

(Please print or type. See item 3 on accompanying instructions.)

3. **AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURE REQUIRED** (See item 2 on accompanying instructions.) I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the information in this Section III is true and correct.

Name _____

Signature (Please do not print.) _____

Street _____ Apt. _____

Date of this request _____ Daytime phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email address _____

SECTION XIII – Post Adjutant Quick Reference Guide

- **AMMUNITION** - See the *Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies*.
- **AUXILIARY** – Certification of American Legion membership determines eligibility for membership in The American Legion Auxiliary, The American Legion Junior Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion. (*see the Officer's Guide*)
- **BINDERS FOR MEMBERSHIP REGISTERS** – Consult your National Emblem Sales catalog for prices or online at www.emblem.legion.org.
- **BURIAL FLAGS** – The VA establishes eligibility. Your funeral director will assist you in obtaining a flag. More information is available at: <http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/bbene/bflags.asp>.
- **CERTIFICATES** – There is a variety available for purchase from National Emblem Sales. Also see *Continuous Membership; Cards and Certificates*, page 10, for certificates issued (at no charge) to members who are deserving of special recognition.
- **CERTIFICATION OF OFFICERS** – It is extremely important to provide your department a list of all post officers immediately following their election. This must be done annually.
- **CHANGE OF ADDRESS** – Be sure to notify department headquarters of any change of address of any member of the post by completing the “Member Data Form” (Stock # 30-001). (*see Member Data Form, page 11*)
- **CLUB ROOMS** – Consult your judge advocate for “best practices” in club room operations and liability issues. For suggested management, planning, and record keeping involved in the club room, see the *Post Operations Manual*, available free of charge from Membership & Post Activities, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206 or call (317) 630-1321. The *Post Operations Manual* and most national Legion publications can be downloaded at www.legion.org/publications.
- **CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS** – See the *Officer's Guide*.
- **CUSTOMER SERVICE** – The national customer service division handles member inquiries from individual members, posts, districts and departments. Inquiries may be submitted in writing to American Legion Customer Service, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. You may also reach Customer Service by telephone at (800) 433-3318 or (317) 860-3111, Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., EST, or by fax at (317) 860-3130 or at their email address, which is cs@legion.org. **Note:** *This should not be confused with the Emblem Sales Customer Service Division.*
- **EMBLEM SALES/ SUPPLIES** – Each post commander and adjutant receive a copy of the latest National Emblem Sales catalog. Additional copies may be obtained from the Emblem Sales Division at P.O. Box 1050, Indianapolis, IN 46206, shop online at www.emblem.legion.org or call toll free at (888) 453-4466.
- **RIFLES (CEREMONIAL)** – See the *Officer's Guide, Section 4*.
- **SURPLUS MILITARY EQUIPMENT** – See the *Officer's Guide*.

Disclaimer of Liability

With respect to information contained in this document neither The American Legion nor any of its employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, nor assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process implemented at the post or department level. All items of information contained in this document are suggestions except for the National Constitution and By-laws. You should consult your own counsel for "best practices" when dealing with any business operations or The American Legion programs even those which are covered by resolutions approved by the National Executive Committee or National Convention.

Artwork # 27/A0212 (B)

Stock # 30-118



THE AMERICAN LEGION