American Legion Training Newsletter
National Headquarters Internal Affairs & Membership Division
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Honor - Serve - Prepare

LEgion Act Passage and Organizational Implications

Memo to all Legion leadership from Kevin Bartlett, National Judge Advocate

U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed S. 504 – the LEGION Act. This Act is now headed to President Trump’s desk for his signature and when signed becomes the law of the land.

The LEGION Act will amend our Charter to read: “36 USC Section 21703 – Membership: An individual is eligible for membership in the corporation [The American Legion] only if the individual – (1) has served in the Armed Forces of (A) the United States at any time during – (i) the period of April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918; or (ii) any time after December 7, 1941; or (B) a government associated with the United States Government during a period or time referred to in subclause (A) of this clause and was a citizen of the United States when the individual entered that service; and (2) was honorably discharged or separated from that service or continues to serve honorably during or after that period or time.”

Additionally our Charter will be amended to add the following clause: “36 USC Section 21704A – Nondiscrimination: The requirements for holding a staff position in the corporation [The American Legion] may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.”

The Constitution of The American Legion, Article XVII states: “In the event the Congress of the United States shall amend the eligibility clause in the Act creating The American Legion, this Constitution shall be deemed amended in conformance therewith, but subject to all consistent limitations and restrictions in this Constitution contained.”

Now if, and when, President Trump signs into law the LEGION Act, Article IV, Section 1 of Constitution of The American Legion shall be immediately changed to read: “An individual is eligible for membership in The American Legion only if the individual – (1) has served in the Armed Forces of (A) the United States at any time during – (i) the period of April 6, 1917, through...

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About this newsletter

This periodic and Legiionnaire-driven newsletter, produced by the Internal Affairs & Membership Division, is designed to address best practices, ideas and training that every Legiionnaire needs to know to engage our membership through effective training now and into the future.

Highlighting new training ideas and resources becoming available in 2019 and beyond, it will also feature essays from successful leaders and training ideas of posts, districts, departments and individuals throughout The American Legion.

Are you a trainer? A writer? We need your submissions! Send your training ideas and articles to train@legion.org.
LEGION Act Passage and Organizational Implications

November 11, 1918; or (ii) any time after December 7, 1941; or (B) a government associated with the United States Government during a period or time referred to in subsection (A) of this section and was a citizen of the United States when the individual entered that service; and (2) was honorably discharged or separated from that service or continues to serve honorably during or after that period or time; 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 themselves to military discipline or unqualified service.”

Additionally Article XIII, Section 2 shall be immediately changed to read: “Membership in The American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the grandmothers, mothers, sisters, wives, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion, and to the grandmothers, mothers, sisters, wives, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941; or who, being citizens of the United States at the time of their 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, and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.”

Therefore all properly documented eligible members for The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion will be accepted immediately by the National Organization and processed in the normal manner. It is recommended that, until the issuance of a new membership application, if the applying member is from a previous undocumented war era they write “Other Conflicts” in the eligibility date section and send it in to their department with the appropriate dues.

Departments are strongly urged to immediately review their respective eligibility dates in their respective Constitutions, media outlets and documents to make the appropriate changes as needed.

Due to the all-encompassing nature of this eligibility date change it should be noted that this change does modify the eligibility dates for the Sons of The American Legion program and American Legion Auxiliary. Both organizations are strongly urged to immediately review their respective eligibility dates in their respective Constitutions, media outlets and documents to make the appropriate changes as needed.

**FIND IT ONLINE** : [myLegion.org](http://myLegion.org) is a FREE website designed to connect members of The American Legion to their post and department leadership.
# Wearing of the American Legion Cap

1. The Legion cap, uniform, or regalia should be worn by its members only when in attendance at official Legion meetings or ceremonies, as official guests at patriotic or other civil functions, or by individuals when officially representing The American Legion on public occasions. For all ceremonies, the uniforms adopted by a department are recommended. However, an official American Legion cap, dark blue or black civilian coat, dark trousers, skirt/slacks/blazer white shirt, black four-in-hand tie, black shoes and socks make an professional uniform. A Legionnaire is considered to be in uniform if wearing an official American Legion cap. Therefore, it is not proper to wear a Legion cap while eating a meal at an official American Legion or civic luncheon or dinner.

2. The cap should be worn in a place of worship only by the guard of honor, color guard and commander of the same while in marching order or standing guard. When one is seated, the cap should be removed.

3. Posts marching in formation into a place of worship should uncover at the door, hold the cap with the right hand over the heart until arriving in the pews and commanded to take seats, and remain uncovered during the entire service. At the close of the service, upon command, the post shall rise, hold the cap with right hand over the hearts, march out of the place of worship, and recover after marching through the door. **Note:** The cap should be held over the heart as one approaches the casket, and is not at any time worn in a place of worship except by the guard of honor, color guard or commander of same while in marching order or standing guard.

4. Legionnaires not in formation will uncover upon entering the place of worship, remain uncovered during the entire service and re-cover after leaving the place of worship.

5. At the graveside, the cap should be held in the right hand

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According to Resolution No. 46, passed in spring 1965 by the National Executive Committee: “A LEGIONNAIRE IS CONSIDERED TO BE IN UNIFORM IF WEARING AN OFFICIAL AMERICAN LEGION CAP.”
Wearing of the American Legion Cap

over the heart during the entire service. In cold and inclement weather, the cap should not be doffed.

6. In meetings, the cap should be worn except during the Pledge of Allegiance, prayer and while standing in silent reverence in memory of departed comrades, when it should be held with the right hand over the heart.

7. A Legionnaire wearing a cap should behave in proper accordance as to salutes, etc., the same as if wearing a military uniform. If not wearing a cap, observe ordinary rules of etiquette for civilian dress.

8. Female Legionnaires should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for women in the armed forces. This is suitable for most situations, but taste and common sense should prevail. By American Legion tradition, a female Legionnaire may leave her cap on during the Pledge of Allegiance, the national anthem, prayer and meals.

9. Legionnaires wishing to attach decorations and/or other official insignia to their caps are advised of NEC Resolution No. 58, adopted April 30-May 1, 1964.

Online Video Resources, Take advantage of American Legion videos on Vimeo and on YouTube. Use these tools at meetings, awareness tables, kiosks, in your lounge anywhere you want to engage others about The Legion.

vimeo.com/americanlegion

www.youtube.com/user/americanlegionHQ

Upcoming Issue Topics:

* Bob Sussan (VA) on post operations and management—best practices (a multi-part series)

Are YOU a Trainer?

Have a hot training tip? We need your submissions! Send your training ideas to train@legion.org.

MISSING AN EDITION?

Go to http://www.legion.org/training/newsletters and read or download any past edition you are missing!
National training under development

ALEI now stands for “American Legion Education Institute,” the forthcoming package of advanced American Legion online coursework for Legion Family members and youth program participants. The expanded ALEI will soon offer online training, YouTube videos, LEAD training videos, lesson plans for department instructors, and assistance for department Legion Colleges.

American Legion Basic Training — only the first step. The former American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI) course was renamed to “Basic Training” to indicate it is the first step of training. The original ALEI was an American Legion correspondence course designed decades ago to give members a history and description of the organization. The new Basic Training course is better defined as an introductory training course within the American Legion Extension Institute (now the new ALEI) explaining our mission, history, programs and basic skills. **It is the anchor course for future training under ALEI.** Basic Training is available now and is free at [www.legion.org/alei](http://www.legion.org/alei).

District Training In A Box

To effectively implement District Training In A Box modules departments should maintain a cadre of approved educators, subject matter experts, facilitators, and trainers to develop members and progress the mission of the department through training. Graduates of National American Legion College and Department American Legion College are an excellent source for this group, but many of this group could be qualified based on their knowledge or expertise on a particular subject or profession. Many essential presenters at national workshops are members of the Sons of The American Legion and the color of a presenter’s cover should never be an assumption of their ability to promote training in a department, regardless of their connection or association to The American Legion family.

National Staff is developing training on the following topics:

**PHASE ONE**  **Projected Phase Completion Date:** 2019 Fall NEC Meetings

- Membership Development / Retention, Post adjutant, MyLegion.org, Membership Recruitment, Post Finance Officer, Leader Development, Post commander, Post Service Officer

**PHASE TWO**  **Projected Phase Completion Date:** 2020 Spring NEC Meetings

- Post Chaplain, Post Filing Requirements, Developing a Post Vision, Post Sergeant-at-Arms, Resolution Writing, Growing a Post, Running a Meeting, American Legion Etiquette/Protocol, Growing a Program, Food/Beverage Management, Helping Veterans and Their Families/OCW, Messaging to Your Community Fundraising, Constitution/By-laws Best Practices, Mentoring

**PHASE THREE**  **Projected Phase Completion Date:** 2020 Fall NEC Meetings

- American Legion Riders (ALR), Oratorical Contest, Scholastic Scholarship, Sons of The American Legion (SAL), Boys State/Nation, American Legion Baseball, Disaster Preparedness/NEF, Scouting, Junior Shooting Sports, AL Foundations (TFA; CWF; NEF), Youth Law Enforcement Cadets, Color/Honor Guard Amateur Radio (TALARC), Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps

While this training has the word “district” in the title, success of this training initiative lies squarely on the shoulders of the department level of the organization.
American Legion National College Class of 2019

November 3-8, 2019

Visit http://www.legion.org/college for more information about the National American Legion College, now in its 20th year. Applications and selection process will be launched in the spring of 2019.

Interested in attending? Contact your post and department commanders.

Training Events Calendar

is now active! Check out http://www.legion.org/training/events for training events in your area.

Are you a department or district trainer and want your event on this calendar?

Add it today!

Don’t see the training you know should be there? Contact your department training team and ask them to add the training event to the national calendar.