

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION



RULES COLOR GUARD AND CONCERT BANDS 2021

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SECTION ONE HISTORY

1.0 HISTORY

Color guards and marching bands have been an important part of American history. In early history, flags were used for a number of purposes. A detachment of soldiers was usually assigned to protect the flag. As history moved forward, color guards were used to lead marching bands, drum and bugle corps and other types of marching units. During the third convention of The American Legion, a resolution was passed making a band contest a feature of each National Convention. At a later convention, color guard competition also became a feature of The American Legion Convention. Since then, The American Legion, having its foundation in the military, has designated these classes of competition to the preservation and education of our country's rich and patriotic history of honor guards and bands by all of our Legion Family Organizations. The American Legion is dedicated to upholding proper protocol, point of honor, and due and proper respect for our National Colors in all ceremonial situations.

SECTION TWO GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND RULES

2.0 TIME AND PLACE

Military, Military-Open, Open and Advancing/Retiring of Colors color guard classes; the Competitive Concert Band and Exhibition Class will be held in the National Convention city starting at a time to be designated by the Convention Commission (henceforth referred as CC). The contest site will be in an appropriate location designated by the CC.

2.1 SUPERVISION

Competition will be under the supervision of the CC. All interpretations and rulings made by the CC are made within the framework of the national rules. These rules properly mandated by the National Executive Committee (NEC), are not subject to review, correction or waiver, unless the NEC properly constituted, in proper session, makes such review, correction or waiver. The rules set forth in this packet will be the rules established for The American Legion National Contests.

2.2 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The American Legion sponsored contest participants that are qualified for participation at the National Convention may receive the contest entry forms by requesting them from the National Convention & Meetings Office (NCMO) or by going to The American Legion web site and downloading the proper contest entry form. Each entry form must be certified by the Adjutant of the units sponsoring Department. Mail entry forms to The American Legion National Headquarters, National Convention & Meetings Office, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. No award will be made to any unit until National Headquarters of The American Legion has approved its eligibility.

Order of appearance in the contest will be in reverse order of receipt of entry form with earliest postmark.

The American Legion National Contest does not limit the number of units allowed to compete in the National Contest from any State Department.

2.3 CONVENTION REGISTRATION

All color guards, competitive concert band and exhibition class members will no longer be required to register at the National Convention UNLESS an individual desires to enter the exhibit hall or the general sessions. Then the individual must register as a guest unless they have previously registered as a delegate or an alternate through their department. Those participants who are 18 years of age and younger must still register, but their registration will be at no charge.

2.4 PARADE/SUNDAY FAMILY EVENT

All competing personnel of each color guard and competitive concert band entering the contest must participate in the National Convention Parade or Sunday Family Event (whichever is held). Only with written permission from the CC Chairman, the Chief Judge of Contests and the Director of National Convention & Meetings can a band or color guard member be excused. In addition, guards and bands must participate with their respective Department unless excused by their Department Adjutant and the CC Chairman.

Members who are physically handicapped (not to exceed 10 percent) may be excused without penalty provided that such personnel are declared at the MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES. Specific written permission for “**other band members**” to be excused must be obtained from the CC Chairman, Chief Judge of Contests and Director of National Convention & Meetings. **If a band member did not participate in the concert band contest they may not participate in the Parade/Sunday family event.**

Failure to participate in the National Convention Parade/Sunday Family Event will result in the disqualification of the unit and forfeiting all monetary awards earned during the Color Guard or Competitive Concert Band competitions.

2.5 MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES

This is a required meeting. One representative of each competing unit will meet with the Chief Judge of Contests prior to the contest at a time and place to be designated by the Chief Judge. The purpose of this meeting is to receive instructions and transact any business, which may come before such meeting. Failure to attend the meeting may put the unit into a penalty situation.

Any contest declarations and spiel sheets must be turned in at the Meeting of Representatives.

2.6 JUDGES

The Chief Judge, judges, tabulators and other contest staff are selected each year based upon their experience, consistency, professionalism and communication skills along with the understanding and ability to uphold the rules and regulations as outlined in the manual. The judges are to rank and rate the unit participants using the subjective scoring system. In all classes, this system has been devised to reward and encourage the continuing development and quality achievement of excellence, taste, style, projection, and variety. Within the color guard and Advancing/Retiring of Colors classes, the system also rewards and encourages uniqueness, as well as innovation, and acknowledges the joint efforts of the performers, designers and instructors in maintaining the traditional American Flag etiquette and requirements.

Seven judges will be provided for the color guard classes, four judges for the Advancing/Retiring of Colors Class, and four judges for the Competitive Concert Band Class. Three judges will be provided for the Exhibition Class to provide constructive comments only.

SECTION THREE

COLOR GUARD RULES

3.0 PURPOSE

The intent of the color guard classes composed of either members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family [i.e. “Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or American Legion mixed participants”] is to honor the American flag. The flag is to be honored in a military manner with dignity, style and bearing associated with a military ceremonial color guard. It may be creative, innovative, and/or entertaining, while keeping the National Colors an integral part of the performance. The American Legion Competitive Flag Code is an essential part of the marching performance, which can be found in the appendix, page 19.

3.1 CLASS ELIGIBILITY

MILITARY CLASS

All unit members competing in this class must meet all the requirements for American Legion membership and be over 18 years of age. This contest will be open to units composed of not less than four (4) or more than five (5) members including the Commanding Officer.

MILITARY-OPEN CLASS

All units must be members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family. If competing for the Commander’s Color Guard, all unit members competing in this class must meet all the requirements for American Legion membership and be over 18 years of age. This contest will be open to units composed of seven (7) members or less including the Commanding Officer.

OPEN CLASS

All units must be members of “The American Legion and/or Legion Family.” There is not an age limit for this class.

This contest will be open to all units composed of not less than four (4) or more than seventeen (17) members including Commanding Officer, Bugler and/or Drummer. The use of recorded or live music is allowed and needs to be communicated to the Chief Judge two weeks in advance of competition. If live music is used, the number of performers is limited to six (6) and considered as a part of the unit proper. These performers will be placed outside the competitive marching area.

ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS

All units competing in the Advancing/Retiring of Colors class must consist entirely of members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family (i.e. Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or American Legion mixed participants). If competing for the Commander's Color Guard, all unit members must meet all the requirements for membership into The American Legion and be over 18 years of age.

This contest will be open to units composed of not less than four (4) members. If the color guard consists of only four (4) members, the American Flag bearer will give all color guard commands.

Units competing in the Advancing/Retiring of Colors Class may also compete in other American Legion Color Guard Contests.

3.2 INSPECTION

The inspections will certify that all units have the required number of personnel for competition, the required equipment is being carried onto the field of competition and to ensure personal appearances and condition of uniforms and equipment is in accordance with a precise military inspection. At the request of the inspection judge, unit members will be required to show their current American Legion Family membership cards.

3.3 UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT

The style and color of uniform will be optional for each unit provided they are within the dignity and propriety required when carrying the National Colors. Headgear is required on the National Color bearer.

Required authorized equipment will consist of National Colors* and at least one weapon and one American Legion Organizational Banner. Additional authorized equipment, such as flags, sidearm, sabers and swords, may be carried and in some classes simulated.

RIFLES:

Rifles are defined as weapons that are hand operated and designed to be fired primarily from the shoulder. The surface of the rifle must have bore lands and grooves to impart rotary motion to the projectile, which conform to the original design of military rifles, past or present. Sights, slings, barrels, triggers and trigger housings are optional; however rifles cannot be loaded.

“Replica rifles” may be used, as long as they have the same weight as the real rifle, including the bolt mechanism.

“Simulated rifles” (rifles of lesser weight with or without simulated bolt mechanism) may be used in OPEN CLASS ONLY.

“Simulated rifles” cannot be used in the MILITARY, MILITARY OPEN CLASS or ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS when competing for the Commander’s Color Guard Award.

Side arms are defined as weapons, which are handheld and fired by means of a primer, percussion cap, or cartridge enclosed igniter.

Sabers (swords) are defined as weapons which are designed to be hand held for cutting, thrusting or slashing an enemy, with either a curved (saber) blade or straight (sword) blade which may be constructed of any material and must have a hand guard. Bayonets are not allowed.

3.4 PERFORMANCE TIMES

MILITARY AND MILITARY-OPEN CLASS

Performance time shall not be less than four (4) minutes or more than six (6) minutes. Timing and judging will start for a unit with the first step across the starting line by a member of the unit proper, excluding the Commanding Officer. A warning signal will be given at the expiration of four (4) minutes. However, timing and all judging will continue until the last member of the unit proper crosses the finish line, including the Commanding Officer.

OPEN CLASS

Performance time shall not be less than five (5) minutes or more than seven (7) minutes. Timing and judging will start for a unit with the first step across the starting line by a member of the unit proper, excluding the Commanding Officer. A warning signal will be given at the expiration of five (5) minutes. However, timing and all judging will continue until the last member of the unit proper crosses the finish line, including the Commanding Officer.

ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS

Each color guard will have a maximum of four (4) minutes for their advancing/retiring of colors performance. Timing and judging will start for a unit with the first step across the starting line by any member of the unit. A warning signal will be given at the expiration of four (4) minutes. However, timing and all judging will continue until the last member of the unit proper crosses the finish line, including the Commanding Officer.

<p>Any violation of the minimum or maximum times for each class shall result in a one-tenth (0.1) point penalty for each three (3) seconds, or fraction thereof.</p>

3.5 REQUIRED MANEUVERS

(a). PASS IN REVIEW

The area of Pass-In-Review shall be ninety (90) inches before and ninety (90) inches after the Saluting Point. This area will be clearly marked. The unit shall be in a company front with the placement of the Commanding Officer at the discretion of the unit. All members, including the Commanding Officer may start the Pass-In-Review with the salute or first step over the line of the Pass-In-Review area. All members of the unit must render the proper salute by displaying “Eyes Right” except: The U.S. Flag bearer shall not dip, but may at the discretion of the unit, render “Eyes Right.” The extreme right element of the unit renders no eyes right but does render the proper salute unless it is the Commander, in which case an “Eyes Right” is required.

Any violation of Pass-In-Review shall result in a one point (1.0) penalty.

(b). PRESENTATION OF COLORS

This maneuver shall be done at a halt, at attention, facing the saluting point. The American Legion organization banner shall dip at least momentarily to the saluting point. All weapons must render the proper “present arms” at least momentarily. All salutes shall be rendered simultaneously at some point in the presentation.

Any violation of Presentation of Colors shall result in a one point (1.0) penalty.

(c). POST AND RETRIEVE

This maneuver includes the U.S. Flag and The American Legion organizational banner. The U.S. Flag is to be posted to the right of the saluting point with its front facing the field. Colors must be properly guarded at all times; for guarding purposes, weapons shall be in the possession of the guarding member at all times. During the ceremony of Posting and Retrieving, two (2) salutes are required, to be executed simultaneously by all members; one directly following posting and one salute directly prior to retrieving colors.

Colors must not be posted for more than sixty (60) seconds. Time shall commence upon the release of the first pike and shall terminate upon the grasp of the last pike. A color is deemed posted immediately upon the release of the pike. A color is deemed retrieved upon the intentional grasp of the pike. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be posted simultaneously, if not so posted, the U.S. Flag must be posted last. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be retrieved simultaneously. However, if not so retrieved, the U.S. Flag must be retrieved first.

The U.S. Flag must be guarded at all times. The U.S. Flag is considered as being properly guarded during maneuvers if the guard is within three (3) paces of the U.S. Flag.

Any violation of Presentation of Colors shall result in a one point (1.0) penalty.

MILITARY AND MILITARY OPEN CLASS

Each unit must execute, in any order, the following maneuvers at the saluting point: Pass-In-Review, Presentation of Colors, Post and Retrieve. In addition, a unit may execute any other “appropriate” maneuvers during their performance.

OPEN CLASS

Each unit must execute, at least one of the following maneuvers at the saluting point: Pass-In-Review, Presentation of Colors, Post and Retrieve. In addition, a unit may execute any other “appropriate” maneuvers during their performance.

ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS

The following are examples of an advancing/retiring of colors routine:

ADVANCING COLORS

Color Guard consisting of minimum number of four (4) is formed at the rear of the contest area in a rank or file, whichever may suit the situation best formation facing the Commander’s station.

In forming a rank, the National Color is to the right of the Post Color and the two Guards are on the respective flanks. In forming a file, the National Color is second in file, preceded by a Rifle Guard and followed respectively by the Post Color and a Rifle Guard. To properly form the Guard, the following sequence of Commands may be used: “Fall In”-“Dress Right Dress”-“Ready Front”-“Right or Left Shoulder Arms”-(Color Bearers should assume the position of carry or any other suitable position at this command) “Forward March.” The above-mentioned commands put the Guard in a forward motion.

Upon arriving at a position in front of the Commander’s station, the following commands may be used: “Guard Halt-Post Colors” (The National Color Bearer steps off in the direction of the flag receptacle to the right of the Commander’s station, halting and facing front upon arriving in front of same). The Post Color Bearer follows the same procedure to the flag receptacle to the left of the Commander’s station. During this procedure the Rifle Guards will assume the position of Port Arms. The next command may be “Place Colors.” Colors may be placed by stepping forward with one foot and placing Colors into the receptacles, making sure any top ornament on each respective color is facing the assemblage. It must be remembered that the Colors may be posted simultaneously, or the Post Color is posted first followed by the National Color. The Color Bearers then return to the position of attention. The next command may be “Present Arms.” The Rifle Guards should render the prescribed salute with their pieces and the Color Bearers should render a right-hand salute. Post Color Bearer should either face the National Color or turn toward the American flag while executing the salute.

The next command sequence may be “Right Shoulder Arms” (Color Bearers recovering from hand salute on same), “Assemble March” (Color Bearers may face the center and step off respectively in the direction from which they came and assume their positions in the formation facing the rear of the competition area). The Rifle Guards may execute an about-face on command and be prepared to move out on the next command with Guard intact.

The next command may be “Forward March” and upon arriving at the starting point, the Guard should be halted with the command of “Guard Halt” and then the Guard may be given “Fall Out.”

RETIRING COLORS

Retrieving the Colors may be executed in nearly the same manner except substituting the command of “Retrieve Colors” for “Post Colors,” and giving the command “Present Arms” upon the Color Bearers arrival in front of their respective colors (Color Bearers will salute at this time).

The next sequence of commands may be “Right Shoulder Arms” (Color Bearers will assume position of attention) “Take Colors” (Color Bearers putting one foot forward to take Colors and assuming position of attention, after securing same). It must be remembered that the Colors may be retrieved simultaneously, or the National Color is retrieved first followed by the Post Color. The next commands may be “Assemble, March” (Color Bearers executing same marching as in returning from Posting). The Rifle Guards will execute about-face after Colors have arrived in respective positions. The Guard may be retired on either end of the scoring floor, with the exception of the last command, which should be “Dismissed.”

3.6 CONDUCT OF COLOR GUARD/PENALTIES

(a). The contest will be held on a floor 40 feet wide and 60 feet long with the outside lines and center line marked. A 90-inch (7ft. 6in.) line will be marked on each side of the centerline for the Pass-in-Review area.

(b). Each Color Guard will have a designated competition time. Following inspection, the unit will remain available to proceed to the starting line for competition.

The failure of any unit to report at the designated competition time will result in a one-half (0.5) point penalty. For each 15 minutes or part thereof and up to the conclusion of the contest, another one-half (0.5) point will be assessed.

(c). Once a unit reports to the starting official that the unit is ready, the unit must start within sixty (60) seconds or less.

Failure to start within 60 seconds or less will result in a one point (1) penalty.

(d). Each Color Guard shall only enter the floor over the designated “starting line” to the left of the saluting point, and exit over the designated “finish line” at the opposite end of the field, to the right of the saluting point. After timing has commenced, there will be no penalty for marking time at the starting line. The saluting point shall be the center of that sideline of the floor that is to the right of the traditional starting line. The use of colors must be with dignity and propriety. All boundary lines are inviolate at all times except for unit entrance, exit, or for members involved in set up prior to the start of the performance or tear down at the end of the performance.

A one-tenth (0.1) point penalty will be assessed for each starting line, exit line, or other boundary line violation.

(e). The Commanding Officer and any guard members playing musical instruments shall be judged as a part of the unit proper. All musical instruments must be played within the boundaries of the competition floor.

(f). Each Color Guard shall be subject to the rulings of the Chief Judge of Contests with respect to entry on, exit from, conduct on the field, and in the immediate area.

(g). The Banner of The American Legion sponsor shall be accorded proper respect at all times.

(h). The current competitive flag code, as adopted by The American Legion National Headquarters, will be the rules for proper use in all matters not covered herein. A Bugler and/or Drummer will be judged on the proficiency of the playing or drumming under the General Effect caption. Bugling shall be limited to standard bugle calls.

(i). No pyrotechnic, discharge of arms, pressurized canisters, dangerous materials, inflammable liquids, powders, or live animals will be permitted.

3.7 OTHER PENALTIES

(a). A unit violating any rule, or part of a rule for which no specific penalty is provided.

Any color guard breaching standard contest etiquette or failing to comply with directions from contest personnel for which no specific penalty is provided, shall be penalized for each such violation, not less than 0.1 point up to disqualification at the discretion of the Chief Judge and Assistant Chief Judge.

(b). Any infraction of flag etiquette. The authority adopted for flag etiquette is the “American Legion Competitive Flag Code,” adopted by The American Legion.

One point (1.0) for each offense

(c). Each piece of dropped equipment or uniform.

Assessment is one-tenth (0.1) penalty for each infraction

(d). Retrieval by any member of each piece of dropped equipment or uniform. Only judges may retrieve dropped equipment or uniform items.

Assessment is one point (1.0) for each retrieval of dropped equipment or uniform

(e). Deliberate grounding of equipment is not permitted in this class.

Assessment is one point (1.0) penalty for each infraction

3.8 PROTESTS

Any protest regarding these contests will in all respects conform to and will be disposed of according to these rules. Protests must be filed with the Chief Judge of Contests, no later than thirty (30) minutes following the conclusion of the contest. Copies of the protest must have been given to any other units involved or affected by the protesting group. The protesting unit must be represented by a proper officer at a meeting on said date, time and place announced by the Chief Judge of Contests. Copies of protests, reviews of decisions and rulings may be obtained from the National Convention & Meetings Office.

Audio-visual recording equipment may be allowed in the area of competition at the discretion of the Chief Judge of Contests; however, no such evidence will be admissible at a protest meeting.

3.9 AWARDS and RECOGNITION

The units with the highest score in each class will be declared the winner of that class.

Prize money will be allocated at the discretion of the Convention Commission as authorized by the National Executive Committee.

The awards will be a National Champion Guidon and Trophy.

3.10 TIE BREAKER

In case of a tie for first place, the color guard with the highest general effect score will be declared the winner.

3.11 NATIONAL COMMANDER'S COLOR GUARD

To be considered for the official National Commander's Champion Color Guard of The American Legion, those units consisting of full American Legion members must have competed in either the Military or Military Open Class and the Advancing/Retiring of Colors Class. The total scores received from each class will be averaged and the unit with the highest score will be awarded the Commander's Color Guard.

SECTION FOUR

COMPETITIVE CONCERT BAND RULES

4.0 PURPOSE

The intent of this contest is to present The American Legion Concert Bands, composed of members from The American Legion Family and local community, in a manner of dignity, style and bearing associated with a military concert band. In this class, concert bands will compete against each other. They will receive judge's comments, performance ranking and rating and any American Legion awards designated for this class.

4.1 ELIGIBILITY

The Competitive Concert Band Contest is open to all American Legion Bands. Each competing band must have a minimum of 30 instruments. At least 20% of the "playing members" must be bona fide members of The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion and/or the American Legion Auxiliary in good standing and must bring their current year American Legion Family membership card to the contest site. Each concert band must represent a Department, District, County or Post organization of The American Legion. Drum Majors participating in the contest will be counted toward the minimum membership and are subject to judging and other requirements. There is not an age restriction for Concert Bands.

*Definition: The Institute of Heraldry, Washington, D.C. has specified in Title 4 of the U.S. Flag Code that the 50-Star American Flag is the flag of the Country (U.S. Colors); therefore, all others shall be treated as banners. All banners and flags shall be dipped at a reviewing stand except the 50-Star Flag of our Country.

4.2 INSPECTION

The inspection will certify that the required number of participants are available for competition, and to ensure personal appearances and condition of uniforms are both professional and identical. Uniforms should be in accordance with each band director's judgement of visual presentation. The formal inspection process for each member will no longer take place. However, a general inspection of the members entering the stage will take place and if an infraction is noticed, a penalty will be assessed.

4.3 SELECTIONS and PENALTIES

Bands in this class will select their music and stay within the allowed performance time. Each Concert Band will be allowed to select three (3) selections of their choosing using the following guidelines:

1. One selection must be a quickstep style march - (a spirited march tune usually accompanying a march in quick time).
2. Two songs of their choice that are of contrasting nature.

All selections will be judged. The judges must be provided with the music scores for the three selections. All scores must have the measures numbered.

Each band will have 10 minutes for setup and teardown and up to 30 minutes for their performance. The overall time limit for each band entering the stage to exiting the stage shall not exceed 40 minutes.

A Concert Band Color Guard is no longer required for the Competitive Concert Band class. The National Colors will be posted prior to the start of the band activities.

PENALTIES

- (a) One (1) point penalty for failure to provide scores for all judges
- (b) One (1) point penalty for failure to number the measures in the judges music scores
- (c) One (1) point penalty for failure to stay within each of the timing limits

4.4 OTHER PENALTIES

- (a) The failure of any concert band to report at the time set for reporting will be penalized one-half point. For each 15 minutes or part thereof and up to the conclusion of the contest another one-half point will be assessed.
- (b) A band violating any rule, or part of a rule, for which no specific penalty is provided will be penalized for each violation, not less than one point nor more than disqualification, at the discretion of the Chief Judge of Contests.

4.5 PROTESTS

Any protests regarding these contests will in all respects, conform to and be disposed of according to these rules. Protests must be filed with the Chief Judge of Contests no later than 30 minutes following the conclusion of the contest. Copies of the protest must be given to any other concert bands involved or affected by the protesting group. The protesting concert band must be represented by a proper officer at a meeting on a date, time and place as announced by the Chief Judge of Contests. Copies of protests, review of the decision and rulings may be obtained from the National Convention & Meetings Office.

Audio-visual recording equipment may be allowed in the area of competition at the discretion of the Chief Judge of Contests; however, no such evidence will be admissible at a protest meeting.

4.6 PRIZES

All prize money will be allocated at the discretion of the Convention Commission as authorized by the National Executive Committee. The winner of Competitive Concert Band Class will receive a Guidon and trophy.

4.7 TIE BREAKER

In case of a tie for first place, the winner of Competitive Concert Band Class with the highest tone and technique scores will be declared the winner.

SECTION FIVE

EXHIBITION CONCERT BAND RULES

5.0 PURPOSE

This class was developed to give American Legion Bands that do not compete in the Competitive Concert Band Contest, but may march in the parade, an opportunity to perform before an audience in a concert setting and also receive constructive comments on their performance from a panel of three judges.

In this class, bands do not compete against other bands and do not receive a score. They will, however, receive judge's commentary on their performance that can be used at the band's discretion. Their performance will not be compared to other band performances.

Each band in this class can select up to three songs of their choice or simply play the music they will play while marching in the parade. The total time for playing their selections is less than 30 minutes.

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

This class is open to American Legion Bands not competing in the Competitive Concert Band Class. The band may participate in the parade but not required.

5.2 INSPECTION

There is no inspection in this class; however, the Exhibition Concert Band must be composed of members from The American Legion family and local community. The Exhibition Concert Band must present themselves in a manner with dignity, style, and bearing associated with a military concert band.

5.3 PRIZES

Any prize money will be allocated at the discretion of the Convention Commission as authorized by the National Executive Committee. All Exhibition Concert Bands will receive a Certificate of Participation.

Appendix

THE AMERICAN LEGION COMPETITIVE FLAG CODE

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this code is to establish a set of rules and regulations for the use of all contest committees, regarding the display of the flag of the United States of America, Canada, or any country a uniformed group may represent, hereinafter referred to as the National Colors or National Flag.
- 1.2 This code confines itself to consideration of the National Colors and the relationship of other flags, pennants, banners, guidons, personnel and equipment as defined herein to the said National Colors. The code is concerned only with the items and/or incidents relative to flag etiquette in regard to proper respect at all times to the National Colors, and does not concern itself with the other captions such as marching and maneuvering, general effect, etc. Use of this code shall not be authority, either expressed or implied, to violate any national, state or provincial laws at variance with it.
- 1.3 Unless excused (Boy or Girl Scouts in Scout uniforms) as provided herein, any color guard that is competitive in nature which exhibits, competes, or appears in any contest, parade or exhibition either as a prime performer (i.e., color guard contest) or as part of a larger unit (i.e., drum corps, drill team, etc.) shall be subject to this code.
- 1.4 Violations of this code may be noted by any regularly assigned marching and maneuvering and/or penalty contest judge; however, only the Chief Judge of Contests or his alternate may assess a penalty.

2.0 GUARD CONDUCT

- 2.1 Any number of National Colors may be carried by a color guard, provided they are properly guarded. In the case of the U.S. Flag, any number of stars in the Union are permitted; however, the most recent authorized U.S. Flag shall be carried at the point of honor.
- 2.2 When a competitive unit is carrying a flag of another nation, it must then follow the code as set forth by the U.S. Heraldic Branch of the U.S. Army. Detailed information may be obtained from the National American Legion Headquarters.

- 2.3 There will be no side-stepping of the National Colors. (This recommendation is made to avoid controversy over direction or motion and possible "trailing" violations that could arise and complicate the judge's task). The National Colors will not do backward or to the rear march.
- 2.4 Additional flags, if carried, must be carried as flags, to wit: any piece of material carried on a pike, pole, staff, or otherwise aloft will be considered as a flag, and must show the proper respect to the National Colors.
- 2.5 All National Colors flagstaffs must have staffhead. No National Colors Flagstaff should bear any staffhead other than a conical spear or those officially authorized by the Army (eagle, acron, ball and spear) or by the Navy (gilt star, gilt lance, gilt ball and flat truck).
- 2.6 Gold fringe on the National Colors is permitted. No streamer, banner or other material may be attached to the pike, pole or final piece of the U.S. Flag except for the standard cord which may be used.
- 2.7 A color guard must consist of the National color and at least one authorized weapon. The maximum distance between the guard and the National Colors will be three 30-inch paces. The direction of motion or the direction of facing of the National Colors and the guard need not be the same. The National Colors will be considered to be properly guarded, regardless of the relative positions, as long as the guard is within the allowable distance. "Authorized weapons" are: rifles (or simulated rifles), side arms, sabres or swords. Simulated rifles are to conform in outward appearance to military rifles, past and present, although sight and sling are optional as are trigger housings, unless they are used to guard the National Colors." Bayonets are not to be used.
- 2.8 Minimum size of the National Colors, three feet by five feet. Minimum size of all other flags and banners. 2½ x 3 feet. No flag shall be larger than the National Colors.
- 2.9 Minimum length of swords and/or sabres is 24 inches.
- 2.10 The position of the National Colors relative to the other flags should be that no flag is in the immediate front of the National Colors unless the other flag or flags render the proper salute (dipping the flag.) The immediate front is the infinite path through which the National Colors can pass safely without contact. This refers to the immediate front of the National Colors, not the immediate front of the other flags.
- 2.11 There will be no flag to the 180 degrees front of the National Colors, facing in the same banner direction ("trailing").

- 2.12 Section 2.10 and 2.11 notwithstanding, sweeps, flash trails, etc., will be allowed for one (1) count.
- 2.13 All flags must conform to the three basic "Points of Honor" for the National Colors as set forth in the flag code of the United States of America, Title 36, United States Code, Chapter 10, Sections 170-178.
 - a) No flag may be higher than the National Colors
 - b) No flag to the right of the National Colors
 - c) No flag in front of the National Colors

3.0 CARRIAGE AND POSITION OF THE NATIONAL COLOR:

- 3.1 The National Colors shall at all times be carried aloft and free.
- 3.2 The National Colors shall never be dipped in any direction, or to any person.
- 3.3 The bearer of the National Colors, while in possession of the National Colors, shall never engage in any dance or theatrical steps.
- 3.4 The National Colors shall never be permitted to touch the ground.
- 3.5 Flags may be aligned in any order or prominence, provided the National Colors shall always be provided with its proper place and accorded the proper respect.
- 3.6 At no time shall another piece of equipment pass between the National Colors and its guard unless the person carrying that piece of equipment qualified as a guard.
- 3.7 The National Colors bearer shall not be armed while in possession of the National Colors.
- 3.8 Headgear is required as part of the uniform for all members of the National Color Squad.