

2022 National Membership Workshop



*Jay Bowen (CO), Chairman
National Membership & Post
Activities Committee*

Are you happy with your current membership program? Did your membership plan result in reaching or exceeding your 2022 goal? If it did, congratulations! If you did not achieve your membership goal, or even if you did, you are bound to learn something new during this year's National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis, July 29-30, at the Sheraton Hotel.

Why attend? We all know the definition of insanity – doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. If your 2022 membership plan did not achieve the results you needed or expected, what makes you think your plan will work in 2023? If you want to enhance your membership program, this is the workshop for you. Even if you hit your goal for 2022, we believe there is something in our training sessions that will make your good plan a better

plan. The National Membership Workshop will offer a series of interactive sessions designed to give you ideas on how to improve your current membership plan, and it will provide ideas on how to create a new and innovative membership plan for 2023.

We also want to hear from you on what worked in your department or what did not. Everyone in attendance can learn from one another sharing their successes. Because the only way we can continue to provide the critical and quality American Legion program support for all our programs is through a strong and large membership. Our programs are vital to our veterans and our community. That's why membership must grow. We only fail if we stop or give up. Veterans do not accept failure. It's not in our DNA.

Since the early 1960s, The American Legion has conducted an annual National Membership Workshop (except during the 2020 COVID shutdown when it was cancelled). In 2021 the workshop was virtual, so we are excited to return in person this year with a great lineup of facilitators and speakers. We believe you will leave the workshop with better ideas and increased knowledge of how to help your departments, districts and posts hit and exceed membership goals for 2023 and beyond.

Let's revisit my first question: Are you happy with your current membership program? If not, I strongly encourage you to participate in this workshop for ideas on programs and ideas that have worked in other departments. If you are happy with your current program, we need you to share your successes with other departments. And remember, I don't care how good your program is because there is always room to make it better.

Responsibility of sergeant-at-arms



Michael Griffith (TX)
National Sergeant-at-Arms

First, let me say what a pleasure it is to serve as the national sergeant-at-arms. It has been the apex of my American Legion experience, and it is creating memories that I will always cherish. Within any organization there must be loyalty and discipline. The sergeant-at-arms is there to instill loyalty and discipline by carrying out any request or orders made by the commander of The American Legion.

As a post sergeant-at-arms, you are the sentinel or tiler, the outer guard of the organization. You guard against the loss of The American Legion's greatest possession, our abiding spirit of comradeship. You should learn the identity of and introduce to the commander all visiting comrades and guests to the post. You are responsible to ensure no one shall remain a stranger in our midst. You need to be ready at all times to assist the commander. Into your hand is given the charge of setting up the colors of our great nation that need to be properly displayed at all post meetings and during ceremonial occasions. If elected as sergeant-at-arms, this is the charge that you will receive at the installation ceremony. It is to the point and descriptive of the duties of the sergeant-at-arms.

The sergeant-at-arms responsibility is to enforce all rules of The American Legion. These include standing and regulation rules to conduct a proper meeting. The sergeant-at-arms performs ceremonial duties such as properly posting the colors of our country, maintaining the POW/MIA chair, and escorting any special guests or members. Appearance is very important so always dress appropriately; no shirts with sayings that might offend anyone. You are supporting the commander.

The sergeant-at-arms supports the commander by making sure he or she has all the materials needed before the meeting. This means any material that will be needed to conduct the business of The American Legion.

Prior to the meeting, meet with the commander. You need to familiarize yourself with the agenda, the escorting of any special guest, and how the room should be set up. From time to time the meeting room may need to be set up differently. As sergeant-at-arms, you want to anticipate change and what the commander may need during the meeting.

The sergeant-at-arms should be there to greet everyone who comes to any event. Remember, every member wants to feel that they are a part of this organization. Provide them with a warm welcome to all events of The American Legion.

A special thank you to those involved in my appointment as national sergeant-at-arms.

More information on the duties and responsibilities of a post sergeant-at-arms may be found in the 2022 [Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies](#).

2022 live training sessions at national convention



Attendees of the 103rd National Convention in Milwaukee will have several opportunities to learn more about The American Legion and how they can better serve veterans and their families. The training sessions and workshops listed below will be conducted by subject matter experts consisting of American Legion members and national staff.

Membership Training Utilizing Subject Matter Experts Wisconsin Center, Room 103, Section B, First Floor

Saturday, Aug. 27

- 9 a.m. **Communicating with legislators**
John Kamin (MD), Legislative Associate, National Legislative Division
- 10 a.m. **Effective communications & public speaking**
Ken LaVoy (OH), National American Legion College Class of 2018
- 11 a.m. **MyLegion for posts**
Jennifer Havlick (MN), National American Legion College Class of 2018
- 12 p.m. **How to run an effective meeting**
Lena Heredia-Perez (FL), National American Legion College Class of 2019
- 1 p.m. **Mentorship/leadership**
Jennifer Havlick (MN), National American Legion College Class of 2018
- 2 p.m. **Suicide prevention**
Charles "Abe" Abrahamson (ID), National American Legion College Class of 2013

Monday, Aug. 29

- 9 a.m. **Inspiring post growth & retention**
Paul Norton (IN), District 11 Public Relations Chairman
- 10 a.m. **Contacting your legislators**
John Kamin (MD), Legislative Associate, National Legislative Division
- 11 a.m. **Buddy Checks**
David Miller (IN), National American Legion College Class of 2018
- 12 p.m. **Resolutions**
Paul Edwards (MN), National American Legion College Class of 2017
- 1 p.m. **District commanders**
James Talaska (IL), National American Legion College Class of 2018
- 2 p.m. **Leadership in volunteer organizations & volunteer trends**
Ron Bradstreet (AL), National American Legion College Class of 2018
James Bryant (AL), National American Legion College Class of 2021

Incoming District Commanders Training

Training for incoming district commanders will be held on Monday, Aug. 29, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Hilton Milwaukee, Wright Ballroom, Sections A-B, Fourth Floor.

TALMA Media Training Workshop

The American Legion Media Alliance (TALMA) will sponsor an in-person and virtual Media Training Workshop at the 103rd National Convention in Milwaukee on Monday, Aug. 29. The session will begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 4 p.m. Central time with a two-hour break for the TALMA awards luncheon. Topics include how to: use Facebook to drive membership and advertise; develop photography skills; use texting to communicate with members; design visual content with Canva; understand and promote Be The One campaign; and more.

Those attending in person can register at legion.org/talma/workshop. The workshop will be held in the Wisconsin Center, Room 102, Section D, First Floor. The workshop also will be streamed live at facebook.com/americanlegionhq.

TALMA will host a special awards luncheon that will include recognition of the contest winners, presentations by speakers and a delicious meal. The meal will be a buffet of pulled smoked chicken, shrimp and crab cakes, coleslaw, potato salad, grilled vegetables, Wisconsin cheeses, desserts and more. The luncheon will begin at 11 a.m. at the Hilton Milwaukee, Wright Ballroom, Section C, Fourth Floor. It is free for TALMA award recipients. For others and guests, the price is \$20. Register at legion.org/talma/banquet.

Intro to MyLegion Workshop

A comprehensive training session on the MyLegion.org platform will be presented by American Legion National IT staff on Monday, Aug. 29, in the Wisconsin Center, Room 103, Sections D-E, First Floor from 9–11:30 a.m. and 2–4:30 p.m. Pre-registration at the Media & Communications booth located in the exhibit hall is required.

Questions? Contact us at LegionTraining@legion.org for more information.

About this newsletter

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

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