



SONS OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION

**UNIFORM CODE  
OF PROCEDURE**

for  
THE ORGANIZATION  
OF NATIONAL  
CONVENTIONS



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**UNIFORM CODE OF PROCEDURE FOR  
THE ORGANIZATION OF  
NATIONAL CONVENTIONS OF  
THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**

**CALL OF NATIONAL CONVENTION**

- I. Not less than 30 days prior to the date of assembly of the National Convention as fixed by the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion (SAL) in conjunction with the National Headquarters of The American Legion shall issue an official call for the National Convention. The official call for the National Convention shall be served upon all detachments of the Sons of The American Legion reporting membership through the department adjutants of The American Legion addressed to the official address of such Department Headquarters as of record at National Headquarters.

The National Adjutant of the SAL shall be authorized to issue copies of the official call to all other national SAL officers, members of the SAL National Executive Committee and other proper functionaries of the national SAL organization, officers, and functionaries of all detachments, and to other proper persons and organizations having an interest or responsibility in conjunction with the National Convention - addressed to such persons or organizations at an address of record at National Headquarters. The call will be published in the National Update.

- II. The official call for the National Convention shall contain within its context or in proper annexes, or supplements affixed to the call, the following information and instructions:

- a.) The time and place of the assembly of the National Convention.
- b.) The purpose of the National Convention including statement of the business to be transacted.
- c.) Official announcement of the time and place for the election of national officers.
- d.) The composition of the National Convention in terms of authorized delegates and other persons entitled to official status as members of the National Convention as provided in the National Constitution and By-Laws. Such statement shall also include instructions for the issuance of official credentials, the time and place for filling the same and other pertinent and proper procedural detail.
- e.) The composition of the National Convention in terms of authorized convention committees and specifications of their assigned tasks and shall include the official number of members of such committees, the manner of appointment of same, the time and place in the convention city of the initial meetings and manner of organization of such committees, and the procedure for official validation of membership on such committees.
- f.) Such other official and pertinent information and instruction as shall properly apply to the orderly and effective organization and operation of the National Convention.

## CONVENTION PROGRAM

- I. Except as may be provided otherwise herein or as directed by the National Executive Committee of the SAL, the establishment and arrangement of the Program of Proceedings of the National Convention shall be the duty and prerogative of the National Commander. He is empowered to invite proper guests to the convention on behalf

of the Sons of The American Legion, extend the privilege of addressing the convention to appropriate speakers, establish the Order of Business of the Convention and to order and arrange incidental ceremonies consistent with and properly a part of the convention.

- II. In establishing the Order of Business, the National Commander shall restrict the schedule of guest speaker for the final session of the convention. The election of national officers and the ceremony of installation shall be arranged and scheduled as a special order of business for 9 a.m. of the final session.
- III. The National Commander shall be authorized and empowered to assign specific tasks to national officers or to appoint such members of the Sons of The American Legion to perform tasks as appear necessary in the conduct of the National Convention.
- IV. The National Commander shall publish in the Official Convention Program the Order of Business and events established by him including a time schedule and shall cause such Order of Business to prevail except as properly altered by him for cause or set aside by the will of the convention upon proper motion in accordance with the standing of special rules of the convention as hereinafter provided.

## **OFFICIAL OF THE CONVENTION**

- I. The Presiding Officer of the National Convention shall be the National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion. He shall have the power and authority to yield the chair from time to time to a national vice commander of the Sons of The American Legion for the conduct of official business of the convention. He may yield the chair to a Past National Commander or chairman of the Sons

of The American Legion or to any other delegate of the National Convention for ceremonial purposes. In either instance due note thereof shall be included in the Minutes of Proceedings.

- II. The National Adjutant shall be the secretary of the National Convention. He may yield this office from time to time to any assistant during the convention by and with the consent of the National Commander or other Presiding Officer then in the chair.
- III. The National Judge Advocate shall be parliamentarian of the National Convention. The National Commander may appoint one or more assistant parliamentarians. Such parliamentarians shall be members of the Sons of The American Legion.
- IV. The National Commander shall appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms and such Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms of the National Convention as to him may be necessary in conducting the proceedings and maintaining order in the National Convention. Sergeant-at-Arms shall be solely responsible to the National Commander or the Presiding Officer in the chair.
- V. The National Commander shall be empowered and authorized to designate the Official Color Guard of the Convention, the Official Musical Organization, and such other functionaries as may be necessary to the proper conduct of proceedings and ceremonies as may be scheduled or directed by him.

## **PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION**

- I. Delegates to a National Convention shall be accredited in writing to the National Coordinator in the number and manner prescribed by Article V of the National Constitution. The rights of detachments

to make and accredit substitutions for absentee delegates or alternate delegates shall be recognized by the National Adjutant, provided that such substitution shall be officially certified by the Detachment Commander and Detachment Adjutant or Department Commander and Department Adjutant in the absence of an organized detachment at the time of the certification required by the National Constitution or at any time prior to the adjournment of the first session of the National Convention.

- II. The National Adjutant, in conjunction with the National SAL Coordinator, within the limits of the National Constitution, is authorized to design and circulate such proper forms as may be required to record and certify the accreditation of delegates and alternate delegates. He is further authorized to establish such reasonable and proper administrative rules as may be necessary in assembling the official list of delegates and alternates accredited and entitled to be seated in the National Convention. All such forms or other administrative requirements shall be certified officially by the Detachment Commander and Detachment Adjutant or the Department Commander and Department Adjutant in the absence of an organized detachment at the time specified by the National Constitution or the National Adjutant. Disputes concerning the accreditation of delegates and alternate delegates shall be referred to the Credentials Committee.

## CONVENTION COMMITTEES

- I. The following Convention Committees shall be established as Standing Convention Committees:



### **Committee:**

1. Americanism
2. Constitutional Amendments
3. Credentials
4. Internal Affairs
5. Membership
6. Finance
7. Legislation and Rules
8. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
9. Children and Youth

### **Number of members:**

Minimum of five members per Committee, no more than one from any detachment. Committees must always be appointed in odd numbers.

- II. The National Commander or the National Executive Committee may, from time to time, establish Special Convention Committees for specific purposes. Such Special Convention Committees shall serve only during the convention for which they are appointed.
- III. The National Convention may cause the creation and appointment of Special Committees upon proper motions adopted.
- IV. Standing Committees may be called for organization by the National Commander in advance of the opening of the National Convention in the convention city at a time and place to be designated.
- V. The National Commander shall be empowered and authorized to designate the members of all Standing and Special Committees. Members need not be Delegates or Alternate Delegates to the National Convention. Such designations shall be made at any time up to 24 hours prior to the opening of the National Convention.

There may also be appointed by the National Commander, one or more Advisers to each Committee, who shall be members of The American Legion.

The National Adjutant shall notify all designees of their appointment to Committees in writing, stating the time and place in the convention city of the initial meetings of these Committees.

- VI. For each Committee, one liaison representative from National Organization Personnel may be assigned as Temporary Chairman by the National Commander. Such Temporary Chairman shall at the appointed time and place, call the roll of authorized members, and proceed to the election, from among members of the Committee, of a Permanent Chairman and Secretary.
- VII. Presence of a majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. Failing to establish an initial quorum, the Committee shall adjourn to a later time for permanent organization.
- VIII. The Temporary Chairman shall file, promptly, a report with the National Adjutant stating the name and detachment of the Permanent Chairman and Secretary with their convention city addresses, and a list of the Committee members responding to the initial roll call.
- IX. Committees shall proceed to business promptly under such internal organization as the Committee shall decide and under such rules of order as it shall establish. Committees, upon their own motions, may seat as ex-officio members with voice but no vote, members of related Standing National Commissions – who are not otherwise designated by the National Commander.

- X.** Committees should endeavor to complete their tasks and compose their final report at least 24 hours in advance of their scheduled report to the National Convention, provided all final policy forming Committee reports to be presented to the Convention shall be approved by the Committees in meetings held after the National Convention is formally convened. Such final reports shall be filed with the office of the National Adjutant as promptly as possible after Committee adoption. Responsibility for assuring that reports are made available shall rest with the office of the National Adjutant.
- XI.A** Committee report shall be prepared in that form best presenting the Committee's recommendations. Particular attention shall be given to reporting the disposition of resolutions referred to the Committee. The work of Committees, however, shall not be confined solely to resolutions referred to them but may extend to action upon any proper subject within their scope and the Committees may make comment and observation in their report upon subjects of policy and operations.
- XII.** Reports of Committees establishing pronouncement of Sons of The American Legion policy or calling for legislative or other action shall be supported by specific resolutions.
- XIII.** Committee reports in narrative form are acceptable if supported by resolutions on specific points of policy and are completely documented as to the source of material used in preparation with particular reference to resolutions assigned to the Committees and showing their disposition.
- XIV.** A delegate, alternate delegate, adviser or other member of the Sons of The American Legion or The American Legion desiring to be heard on a subject

before a Convention Committee shall apply to the Committee Chairman or Secretary.

## **DUTIES OF STANDING CONVENTION COMMITTEES**

### **1. Americanism**

To formulate and recommend matters of Sons of The American Legion policy to the Convention, including plans and programs respecting an understanding and appreciation of the government of the United States, its Constitution and other historic political pronouncements as well as the duties and responsibilities of citizenship thereunder with reference to, but not limited to, matters pertaining to patriotic devotion to the United States citizens, education and educational facilities, development of patriotic activities and other matters such as religious emphasis consistent with the aims and purposes of the Sons of The American Legion in the cultivation of loyalty to the United States as expressed in the Preamble to the Sons of The American Legion Constitution.

### **2. Constitutional Amendments**

To study and make recommendations to the National Convention concerning all matters pertaining to proposed changes in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Sons of The American Legion.

### **3. Credentials**

To receive from the National Adjutant a statement of the number of delegates to which the several detachments are entitled under the Constitution to verify and recommend approval of the same, including adjustment of disputes thereon and to report to the National Convention at its first session, and immediately preceding the election of officers.

#### **4. Internal Affairs**

To formulate and recommend matters of policy concerning the Internal Affairs of the Sons of The American Legion and to consider resolutions not otherwise assigned to other Standing Committees.

#### **5. Membership**

To formulate and recommend matters of policy to the Convention, including plans respecting promotion of the Sons of The American Legion membership.

#### **6. Finance**

To formulate and recommend matters of policy to the Convention concerning the financial affairs of the Sons of The American Legion.

#### **7. Legislation and Rules**

To consider and devise special rules of order for the National Convention not provided for in the Standing Rules of order as may be required or directed by the Convention for the purpose of processing issues or the special businesses of the Convention. Such special rules shall apply only to the Convention for which they were adopted.

To formulate and recommend matters of Sons of The American Legion policy to the Convention including plans and programs respecting Federal Legislation.

#### **8. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

To formulate and recommend matters of policy to the National Convention on issues affecting Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, including plans respective to active participation and promotion by the Sons of The American Legion membership.

#### **9. Children and Youth**

To formulate and recommend matters of policy to the National Convention on issues regarding

Children and Youth, including plans respective to active participation and promotion by the Sons of The American Legion membership.

## **ORGANIZATION OF DETACHMENT CONVENTION DELEGATES**

1. Detachment delegations in the National Convention shall be organized according to the following:
  - a.) Each Detachment Delegation shall select from among its delegates a Delegation Chairman and shall designate a Delegation Secretary. Notice of such selection shall be submitted in writing to the National Adjutant before the opening session of the convention.
  - b.) The Delegation Chairman shall preside over the Detachment Delegation caucuses, when convened in the National Convention. He shall be recognized by the Presiding Officer as the floor leader of the delegation and shall be responsible under the Convention rules for polling and announcing the vote of the delegation. He shall be the principle authority in identifying the official delegates and alternates of the delegation on questions of the right to the floor and shall otherwise be responsible for the proper representation of the Detachment delegation in the Convention.
  - c.) The Delegation Secretary shall receive all formal notices or other communications in the name of the Detachment Delegation. He shall perform such other duty in consonance with his office as may be required of him under the Rules of the Convention or as prescribed by the Delegation Caucus.

## STANDING RULES OF CONVENTION

1. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be the authority on parliamentary procedure, with the following modifications:
2. A delegate desiring to make a motion or address the Convention shall rise, address the chair as "Mr. Chairman" and state his name and the name of the detachment before proceeding.
3. Debate shall be limited to five minutes for delegates and alternates.
4. Debate on any one subject presented to the Convention shall be limited to one-half hour except under such special rule, as the Convention shall adopt prior to debate.
5. Two delegates from any one delegation shall be permitted the floor on any one question. Where disagreement exists, one delegate will be allowed to speak on each side of the question. However, this rule shall be applied separately for each division.
6. The floor shall be permitted but once to any individual delegate or alternate delegate on any one question, except by a two-thirds vote of the Convention. Chairmen of Convention Committees may speak as frequently as may be necessary in connection with the reports of their Committees. The Presiding Officer shall not entertain any motion that will curtail debate without affording the Committee Chairman an opportunity for rebuttal.
7. Decisions on rules of debate or parliamentary order by the Presiding Officer may be subject to appeal by any two delegates under a Point of Order. Such appeal shall take precedence over any other pending questions and shall be decided

forthwith. An appeal from the decision of the Chair shall be put to the Convention on the question: "Shall the Chair be sustained?"

8. When the poll of any Detachment Delegation is demanded by a delegate of such detachment, the Convention Secretary shall poll the delegation without discussion of the question being voted upon.
9. On the roll calls, the Delegation Chairman shall poll his delegation on the floor and announce its vote.
10. In the event a delegation secretary is not an accredited delegate or alternate, he shall be seated with his delegation.
11. Past National Commander's or Chairmen's votes shall be cast with their respective delegations.
12. Only accredited delegates or their alternates shall participate, directly or indirectly, in voice vote on any subject before the Convention.
13. Detachment delegations may arrive at a vote in such a manner as they choose, but shall announce it in terms of full units and not in terms of a fractional part of a vote. The vote of any delegate absent and not represented by an alternate shall be cast by a majority of the delegates present from his detachment.
14. There shall be no unit rule of voting.
15. Voting shall be by acclamation, except when a roll call is demanded by the Chairman of at least three detachments.
16. In the event a detachment has not provided the method by which alternates shall be designated to serve in the place of absent delegates, the Chairman of the delegation shall make such designation.



17. Prior to the election of National Officers, the National Commander shall appoint, subject to the approval of the Convention, a Judge of Election and such number of tellers as he deems necessary, provided that the total number of tellers is an odd number. In a contested election each candidate going to the ballot shall be entitled to one teller of his choice.
18. Nominations for National Officers shall be from the floor on roll call of the detachments alphabetically arranged. Each detachment may present as many candidates as it chooses, unless otherwise specified.
19. Nominating speeches for National Officers shall be limited to five minutes each. Not more than two seconding speeches shall be made for any candidate, and said speeches shall be limited to three minutes. All nomination speeches are limited to only official delegates of the Sons of The American Legion National Convention with appropriate Sons of The American Legion caps and National Convention delegate badges.
20. If there is only one candidate nominated for an office, election shall be by acclamation, except when a roll call is requested by the chairmen of at least three detachments.
21. When two or more candidates are nominated for any office, balloting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority of the votes of the Convention, except in the election of National Vice Commander.

In the elections for National Vice Commanders, the Adjutant shall poll all detachments in alphabetical order by areas, at which time each detachment may nominate, second or pass. All Vice Commanders shall be nominated in the single roll call. The

Adjutant shall determine if there is any area that has more than one candidate nominated whose election(s) shall be voted upon separately. The Commander shall then call for the election of all nominated candidates, being no two candidates from any one area. In a contested election for National Vice Commanders, balloting shall continue until majorities are established for two candidates under the following provisions:

If, on any ballot taken, less than two candidates receive a majority of the votes to elect, then the candidate receiving a majority shall be declared elected and balloting will continue until a second candidate also receives a majority.

Candidates from each area shall run only against other candidates from that area.

22. The Convention will nominate and elect a National Commander and five National Vice Commanders in this sequence and as required in Article VI of the National Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion.
23. Those recognized by the National Commander shall be entitled to a respectful hearing, and the Chair shall have the authority to clear the gallery of the floor or have the Sergeant-at-Arms escort from the Convention anyone creating a disturbance or interfering with orderly procedure.
24. Campaigning on the floor of National Convention is restricted to pamphlets and other items placed on chairs, with free standing or hand-held signs allowed at the Sunday session. No signs affixed to walls are allowed at any time. Any materials handed directly to delegates must be done outside the convention room.

25. The consent of two-thirds of the voting strength of the Convention is necessary for suspension of the Standing Rules of the Convention.

## **NATIONAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS**

1. Resolutions shall be submitted upon a proper form and shall be numbered for identification as provided by the National Adjutant.
2. Resolutions shall be approved by the detachment, the National Executive Committee of the Sons of The American Legion, an Outlying Squadron not affiliated with a detachment or any Standing or Special Committee of the Conventions. Resolutions submitted in advance of the Convention by Detachments, Outlying Squadrons, and the NEC shall be filed with the National Adjutant.
3. Resolutions emanating from a Detachment Convention shall be forwarded to the National Adjutant to be in his hand 30 days prior to the opening of the Convention. The only exception to this rule is in the case of a Detachment Convention held on a date that renders it physically impossible to comply with the restricted time limit.
4. Resolutions originating with and approved by Convention Committee shall be received and processed through the National Adjutant for record and assigned number.
5. The National Adjutant shall maintain a Convention Register of all resolutions received, assigned and processed which shall identify each resolution by number, indicate the Committee to which the resolution was referred and the original source.
6. In the disposition of resolutions considered,

Convention Committees shall present them in the following manner: approved, approved as amended, consolidated, referred, received and recorded, and rejected. The term “received and recorded” shall be applied to resolutions that reiterate or reaffirm a present policy position of the Sons of The American Legion.

7. All resolutions assigned to, or originating with Convention Committees, shall be identified in the Committee reports to the Convention with a statement of Committee disposition.

## **AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFORM CODE OF PROCEDURE**

1. This Uniform Code of Procedure may be amended:
  - By majority vote of the total authorized representation at a National Convention on a resolution properly before it, or
  - By action of the Sons of The American Legion National Executive Committee.

*Authorized by:*

*Article, V, Section 6, SAL National Constitution*

*Article, VI, Section 1, SAL National Constitution*

*Approved by:*

*1st National SAL Convention, Aug. 19-20, 1972,  
Chicago*

*SAL National Executive Committee, May 6, 2002*

*The National Executive Committee of  
The American Legion, May 8, 2002*

*39th National SAL Convention, August 2010  
Milwaukee*

*SAL National Executive Committee, Oct. 14, 2010*

*The National Executive Committee of  
The American Legion, Oct. 17, 2010*







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