

# AMVETS

Department of Washington

## Constitution and Bylaws



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# DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON CONSTITUTION

## Article I: Department Organization

**Section 1:** Departments shall be organized with a headquarters located as authorized by the department convention or an intervening State (Department) Executive Committee (DEC) meeting. Local posts shall be formed and intermediate administrative groups may be created by the Department Executive Committee to function within their respective jurisdiction where such action is deemed advisable.

This appendix to the AMVETS Uniform Department Constitution shall be the constitution for all departments **Appendix E** to the AMVETS National Constitution shall be the constitution for all departments.

In accordance with **Article IX, Section 10** of the AMVETS National Constitution, Departments shall formulate Bylaws to address those aspects of operation not covered in this constitution no later than July 1, 2007.

**Section 2:** Departments shall be composed of state officers, both elected and appointed and the members of the Department Executive Committee.

It shall be the duty of the department officers to advance the cause of AMVETS, to carry out its aims and purposes, and to provide the realization of the plans and policies established by the mandates of the department convention and the Department Executive Committee.

## Article II: Department Convention

Each department shall conduct its convention, to be held annually between May 1 and June 30, at which time it shall elect department officers and its delegate and alternate to the National Convention and its national executive committeeman and alternate.

Elected department officers shall assume office not later than July 15.

<sup>1</sup>National executive committeemen and alternates shall assume office in accordance with **Article VII, Section 4** of the National Constitution.

- a) The department convention delegation shall be comprised as prescribed by the Department Bylaws.
- b) Each post shall choose a delegate(s) and an alternate(s) at a post meeting.
- c) The department commander shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- d) Each delegate shall be entitled to one vote.
- e) Alternates shall have all rights and privileges of their delegates except they shall vote only in their delegate's absence.
- f) No delegate or alternate, however, shall be seated at the department convention unless the individual's accounts with department headquarters are fully paid up.

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<sup>1</sup> Reference National Constitution effective September 1, 2015, "Each national executive committeeman and alternate executive committeeman shall take office on adjournment of the department convention at which the committeeman or alternate is elected and serve until a successor is duly elected. Each such national executive committeeman and alternate national executive committeeman shall serve for a term of two years, with the department of Alabama through Missouri, including the District of Columbia, selecting in the even-numbered years and Montana through Wyoming selecting in the odd-numbered years."

- g) No delegate of an accredited post shall be seated at the department convention unless the respective post shall be fully paid up in all its accounts with department headquarters and department districts.
- h) No post delegate or alternate shall be permitted to register as such unless the delegate or alternate shall have been a member in good standing on the department rolls for at least 30 days prior to the opening of said convention and possesses a membership card or other satisfactory evidence identifying the delegate or alternate as a member of the pose from which the individual is registering.
- i) Department shall specific convention quorum requirements in bylaws or convention rules (see **Bylaws, Article VI, Section 6**).
- j) No department convention bids shall be received on the convention floor unless they are previously submitted to the Department Finance Committee and/or the Department Executive Committee in accordance with the rules of said committee, and in accordance wit the rules and procedures of the Department Executive Committee.
- k) Convention Chairmen shall be chosen in accordance with the Department Bylaws.
- l) The Convention Rules Committee, after reviewing and making necessary changes, shall present to the Department Executive Committee at a regular DEC meeting, for its approval, the Rules of the Annual Convention following the DEC meeting at which the rules are considered.
- m) The Department Headquarters will then circulate those rules to the posts at least 30 days prior to the Annual Convention,
- n) The Rules of the Convention may be amended by a majority vote of the delegates assembled at the Annual Department Convention.

## **Article III: Election and Appointment of Officers**

### **Section 1:**

- a) The department convention shall elect a department commander, a department first vice commander, a department second vice commander, a department finance officer, a department National Executive Committeeman, a department Alternate National Executive Committeeman, a department provost marshal, a department judge advocate, and any other officers prescribed in the Department Bylaws.
- b) No member shall be eligible for any department office unless the individual is fully paid up in all accounts with the department headquarters 30 days prior to the opening date of the department convention.
- c) Departments shall specify candidate eligibility certification procedures in the bylaws or convention rules.
- d) The department commander, with the consent and approval of the Department Executive Committee, shall appoint and have the power to remove a department chaplain, a department inspector general and such other officers and committee chairmen as specified in the Department Bylaws. These appointments shall be made at the post-convention DEC meeting.

### **Section 2:**

All elected and appointment department officers shall be members of the Department Executive Committee.

The authority for officers to vote on the Department Executive Committee shall be prescribed in the Department Bylaws.

**Section 3:**

- a) An elected officer may be removed from office only by a two-thirds vote of the Department Executive Committee after written charges against such officer shall have been preferred and furnished by certified mail to the officer concerned and to the members of the Department Executive Committee.
- b) A full hearing shall be held by the Department Executive Committee on charges preferred against an elected department officer. Such hearing shall be held not less than 30 days after the charges are referred and mailed.
- c) The procedure for removal from office of elected officers shall be prescribed by the Department Executive Committee on recommendation of the department judge advocate in accordance with the UNIFORM CODE OF PROCEDURE FOR THE SUSPENSION OR EXCLUSION OF A MEMBER (AMVETS **National Bylaws Appendix B**).

**Section 4:**

Department officers elected at a department convention shall be installed in office at a ceremony held at the Convention. The term of office shall be prescribed in the Department bylaws.

**Section 5:**

In the event of a vacancy in the office of department commander, the department first vice commander shall succeed to that office, except that the Department Bylaws may prescribe election of the department commander by the Department Executive Committee.

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the department first vice commander, the department second vice commander shall assume the office of department first vice commander.

Any additional vice commanders specified in the department bylaws shall similarly participate in succession.

**Section 6:**

In the event of a vacancy in the office of the most junior vice commander, department finance officer, department provost marshal or department judge advocate, or other elected officer, regardless of the reason for such vacancy, the department commander shall appoint an AMVET to fill the vacant office for the unexpired term.

Such appointment shall be with the approval of the Department Executive Committee and the appointee shall be in compliance with all qualification and restrictions regarding the holding of said office as set forth in any other article of the constitution and bylaws of AMVETS, except the requirement of election.

On approval of the Department Executive Committee, the appointee shall assume all powers and responsibility pertaining to the office as though elected.

**Article IV: Department Executive Committee Meetings**

**Section 1**

The administrative power between department conventions shall be vested in the Department Executive Committee, which shall be composed of the department commander, the department first vice commander and the department second vice commander and all other elected department officers, past department commanders and others as prescribed by the Department Bylaws.

**Section 2:**

Each of the above members shall be entitled to one vote except the department commander, who shall vote only in case of a tie, and except that the past department commanders present may be entitled to vote as prescribed in the Department Bylaws.

**Section 3:**

Voting members of the Department Executive Committee shall be delegates to the department convention, each entitled to one vote, providing their respective posts have complied with all the provisions of the department constitution and bylaws.

**Article V: Finances**

The management of the Department budget as approved at the department convention shall be under the control of the Department Executive Committee, which shall delegate sufficient general and specific authority to the Department Finance Committee, as authorized by the Department Bylaws, to carry out the usual duties of such committee.

**Article VI: Department Finance Committee****Section 1:**

The Department Finance Committee, with the approval of the Department Executive Committee, shall have the authority to retain independent investment experts as needed for consultation in supervising any and all AMVETS funds.

- a) The Department Finance Committee shall consist of members as prescribed in the Department Bylaws.
- b) The Finance Committee shall meet prior to each DEC meeting, or at other times as set forth in the Department Bylaws.
- c) The Finance Committee shall make an annual report to the department convention. Revenue shall be derived from annual dues and such other sources as may be approved by the Department Executive Committee.
- d) The Finance Committee shall submit a provisional annual budget as prescribed in the Department Bylaws.

**Section 2:**

The following provisions shall govern the establishment and administration of the budget of the Department Headquarters:

- a) The Finance Committee has the sole fiduciary responsibility to prepare and present a budget that is fiscally sound.
- b) In determining the budget, revenue shall be based on tangible assumptions and realistic and/or proven income projections to include revenue that provides funding for the operations, and programs approved by the Finance Committee, Department Executive Committee and department convention.
- c) In the full execution of approved programs with the budget, expenses shall be budgeted as realistically as possible to ensure overall spending integrity.
- d) A contingency budget shall be developed solely to address unexpected expenses during the operating fiscal year and included in the budget.

- e) In no case shall the Department Finance Committee or any other body of the department organization be permitted to adopt or approve a budget in which the expenses, provisions for capital expenditures and provisions for debt reduction exceed the income established above. Under no circumstances, however, shall the aggregate budget as approved by the Department Convention be over-expended.
- f) Violation of any of the foregoing provisions by any person shall constitute cause for disciplinary action, including removal from office or dismissal from employment; and
- g) Any person who willfully violates any provision of this section shall, in addition to any other disciplinary action taken, be personally financially liable for any amount spent that exceeds the budget appropriations unless such excess had prior approval of the Department Finance Committee.
- h) Any salary or expense money due or to become due to such person may be retained by the organization to offset all or any part of the unauthorized over-expenditure.

**Section 3:**

The Department Finance Committee shall have the power and authority to designate the depository banks or other financial institutions to receive deposits into various accounts belonging to the Department and to disburse such funds on checks signed by two or more persons as designated by the Department Bylaws.

**Section 4:**

The fiscal year shall be designated in the Department Bylaws.

**Section 5:**

Any resolution emanating from a department convention involving the expenditure of funds or any financial commitment shall be referred to the Department Finance Committee for approval.

In reviewing resolution adopted at a department convention, the Department Finance Committee shall have three options:

- 1) Provide funding from the newly adopted department budget;
- 2) Defer funding pending appropriate planning by the department staff as part of the next fiscal year;
- or
- 3) Deny funding based on current and projected funding levels.

If a resolution is denied or deferred because of a want of available funds within the meaning of Section 13 hereof, the Department Finance committee shall report such decision to the Department Executive Committee at its next meeting.

## Article VII: Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Post Charters

**Section 1:**

- a) The Department Executive Committee, after notice and hearing, may cancel, suspend or revoke the charter of any post for good and sufficient cause. Procedure for any such action shall be as prescribed by the AMVETS National Bylaws, Appendix A.
- b) In the event of the cancellation, suspension or revocation of any charter of any post, the suspended body shall have the right of appeal to the next department convention.

**Section 2:**

As prescribed in the Department Bylaws, the department commander, after notice, may invoke and formulate a trusteeship to take over the operation of a post for good and sufficient reasons and for the well-being of the AMVET organization.

**Section 3:**

From among the voting membership of the Department Executive Committee, the department commander shall appoint a Department Grievance Committee, consisting of three members, to hear grievances and appeals as are provided for in this constitution and bylaws and to report its finding and recommendations to the Department Executive Committee.

The Department Commander shall designate the chairman.

This committee shall function during the department convention, meetings of the Department Executive Committee, and upon the call of the Department Commander or Department Executive Committee.

Such appointees shall serve at the pleasure of the Department Commander with the advice and consent of the Department Executive Committee.

The Department Commander and the State Judge Advocate shall serve as ex-officio members of this committee without vote.

**Article VIII:      Amendment**

A Uniform Department Constitution shall be promulgated and shall be known as Appendix E to the AMVETS National Constitution and Bylaws. Amendments to Appendix E may only be made by a majority of the delegates voting at a National Convention.

# DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON BYLAWS

## STANDING RULES

- 1) New post shall be accepted into the Department upon submission of the appropriate paperwork and fees. (Amended 9/9/2000)
- 2) The Department shall pay the delegates fees to the department convention for the post commanders. (Amended 11/4/2017)
- 3) The Department shall send a copy of the DEC minutes to all posts failing to attend DEC meetings. (Adopted 3/14/1998)
- 4) The Department will reimburse new posts for the initial Washington State incorporation fee. The post will be responsible for the annual fee. (Amended 5/30/2009)
- 5) DEPARTMENT AMVET OF THE YEAR: Any post member may nominate a department member to be considered for the award. The nomination shall be in the form of a signed letter including the writer's name, address and telephone number. All nomination must be received by the Department Executive Director by May 1st, the Department Commander may select the winning nomination from the letters received, or at their discretion select an alternate member to receive the award. The AMVET of the Year will receive an appropriate plaque and a winter jacket with a large AMVETS patch on the back, along with lettering "AMVETS, Department of Washington AMVET of the Year", the year awarded and their name on the front. Award to be awarded at the annual department convention. (Amended 3/10/2001 and 5/30/2009)
- 6) The Department shall give 200 lapel pins to the Department Auxiliary and 200 Department level pins to the Department Commander, who will distribute them among the Department delegates attending the National Convention. There is no charge for these pins. (Amended 3/10/2001)
- 7) Proceeds from Department fund raising programs operated jointly with the Auxiliary should be divided equally between the Department and the Auxiliary. (Added 9/13/2008 and amended 7/1/2012)
- 8) The Department Commander, with consent of a Post's Commander, to assign Department Executive Director who have specific administrative expertise, online access to assist or manage Post completing, filing and payment for completion of annual IRS Form 990N, WA. State annual non-profit reports and reinstatements of IRS tax exempt state and/or WA; the State non-profit corporation status. The Post shall be responsible for any associated costs.

## **Article I: Department Organization**

The Department of Washington shall be organized as required by the Uniform Department Constitution.

- a) There shall be two subordinate administrative groups designated as Eastern and Western Districts.
- b) The District Commanders shall be appointed by the Department Commander.

## **Article II: Department Convention**

### **Section 1:**

A Department Convention shall be held annually in Washington State between May 1 and June 30, at a location approved by the Convention Association. The location of the next two conventions shall be suggested by the delegates present at a Department Convention for not more than two years in advance.

### **Section 2:**

- a) Each post shall be automatically entitled to five (5) delegates. In addition to the initial five (5), they shall be entitled to one (1) delegate for each 10 (ten) members up to fifty (50) members and one (1) additional delegate for each additional fifty (50) members. Each post is entitled to one (1) alternate for each authorized delegate.
- b) Posts chartered between conventions shall be entitled to delegate representation notwithstanding the provisions of these bylaws.

### **Section 3:**

No delegates or alternates of accredited post shall be seated at the Department Convention unless their respective posts are fully paid up in all their accounts with the Department and their accounts and memberships shall be certified by the Department Executive Director and Finance Officer as of thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the Department Convention.

### **Section 4:**

Fifty-one percent (51%) of the voting delegates registered and in attendance at the Department Convention shall constitute a quorum.

## **Article III: Election and Appointment of Officers**

### **Section 1:**

- a) The Department Convention shall elect annually a Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, 3rd Vice Commander, Finance Officer, Provost Marshall, and Judge Advocate.
- b) The Department Commander may succeed himself/herself once (and may again be elected to the position of Department Commander after he/she has been out of office for two (2) years or more. He/she shall not hold an elected office in an AMVETS post or any other chartered veteran organizations.
- c) The National Executive Committeeman (NEC) and the Alternate National Executive Committeeman (ANEC) shall serve for a period of two (2) years and shall be elected for election to any Department office of AMVETS.
- d) No salaried employee of the AMVETS Department of Washington shall be eligible for election to any Department Office of AMVETS.

**Section 2:**

- a) The Department Commander, with the consent and approval of the DEC shall appoint a Historian, and Chaplain and may appoint District Commanders as required.
- b) The Executive Director, Chaplain, and Historian shall be members of the DEC without a vote.
- c) No salaried appointed officer may be discharged without the approval of the DEC.

**Section 3:**

- a) The appointment of the Executive Director and the Legislative Affairs Director shall be permanent positions as of March 5, 2018; those currently serving in these positions shall be grandfathered into the positions they currently hold. (Effective 3/14/2018)
- b) The removal of the Executive Director and the Legislative Affairs Director shall be by mutual agreement and/or for cause, this being a written document presented at a DEC meeting, a 2/3 majority is required to remove any of the permanent positions.
- c) <sup>2</sup>The appointment of the Inspector General and the Communications Director shall be permanent positions as of the first Department Executive Committee meeting subsequent to the 2019 Department Convention; those currently serving in these positions shall be grandfathered in the positions they currently hold.
- d) The removal of the Communications Director and the Inspector General shall be by mutual agreement and/or for cause, this being a written document presented to the appointed offices by the Commander and subsequently voted on by the members present at a DEC meeting, a 2/3 majority is required to remove any of the permanent positions.

**Section 4:**

The Department Commander shall:

- a) Have the power to suspend any appointed officer for cause.
- b) Appoint an acting officer to perform the duties of the suspended officer until the next meeting of the Executive Committee;
- c) The power of removal from office, of any officer for cause, is vested in the DEC.

**Section 5:**

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Department Commander, the 1st Vice Commander will complete the term of the Department Commander. The 2nd Vice Commander and the 3rd Vice Commander will move up to the next higher position. The Department Commander shall appoint an eligible AMVET to fill the 3rd Vice Commanders vacancy for the unexpired term.

**Section 6:**

No Department Commander shall be elected for more than two successive terms.

**Section 7:**

No member shall be eligible for any elected department office until they have been a member of AMVETS for at least one (1) year and has served as an elected post officer for at least six (6) months. Candidates for the Department Commander must have served a full one-year term as Post Commander or District Commander.

**Section 8:**

The Department Commander shall declare an elective office vacant. He shall have the power to appoint an eligible AMVET to carry out the duties of the office for the unexpired term. Such an appointment shall be confirmed by the DEC.

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<sup>2</sup> Appointment of Inspector General and Communications Director approved October 12, 2019 DEC.

### **Section 9:**

- a) An elected officer shall be informed by certified mail of charges preferred against them and must be given a copy of alleged grievance and informed of the date and place of the hearing.
- b) The members of the Executive Committee shall be provided copies of the alleged grievance.
- c) A full hearing shall be held not less than thirty (30) days after the charges have been received.
- d) Removal from office shall required two-thirds (2/3) vote of the DEC.
- e) Failure of the subject officer to appear for the hearing shall result in his removal from office.

## **Article IV: Duties of Department Officers**

### **Section 1:**

The **Commander**, AMVETS Department of Washington, shall:

- a) Preside at all functions of AMVETS Department of Washington.
- b) Assure that the affairs of the Department are conducted with dignity and honor.
- c) Attend the National AMVETS Convention immediately subsequent to final term of office, as the Department delegate to the National Convention and shall be chairman of the department delegation.
- d) Present to the DEC resolutions and other business of the department directed to the National Convention.
- e) Appoint a department delegate to the National Convention in the event the immediate past commander is unable to attend.
- f) Declare an office vacant, with the approval for the DEC, if the officer holder exhibits disinterest in the affairs of the office or fails to carry out the duties of the office set forth in these Bylaws.
- g) Appoint chairmen for committees he deems necessary for proper conduct of the affairs of the organization. Chairmen shall be appointed for:
  - 1) Convention Committee
  - 2) Finance Committee
  - 3) ROTC/JROTC Committee
- h) Be the Chief Executive Officer of the department, enjoying the rights and privileges, while he/she is shouldering the responsibilities of the office.
- i) Organize new posts throughout the state and support their growth and development.
- j) Ensure that the activities of all posts in the department comply with Department and National constitutions and are in the best interest for AMVETS.
- k) Initiate disciplinary action against posts or members that do not adhere to the Department Constitution and Bylaw guidelines.
- l) Designate three (3) AMVET members to sign checks drawn on the financial accounts and assure the signature cards are completed and turned into the financial institution.
- m) Assure the Department has provided a surety bond for the Finance Officer and account signatories. Assure that Internal Revenue Service (IRS) form 990 is prepared and files with the IRS.

### **Section 2:**

The **1st Vice Commander** will:

- a) Represent the department at all official functions, in the absence of the Commander.
- b) Assist the Commander in promoting membership in AMVETS.
- c) Carry out annual membership campaigns of AMVETS.
- d) Assist in membership promotion.
- e) Prepare and give a report on the above items at each DEC meeting and at the convention and provide a written copy to the Executive Director.

### **Section 3:**

The **2nd Vice Commander** shall:

- a) Assist the Commander in seeing that the various programs designed to benefit veterans are properly carried out.
- b) Assist the Commander with AMVETS sponsored programs involving contact with the community.
- c) Prepare and give a report of the above items at each DEC meeting and at the convention and provide a written copy to the Executive Director.
- d) Represent the Commander at all functions in the absence of the Commander and 1st Vice Commander.

### **Section 4:**

The **3rd Vice Commander** shall:

- a) Assist the Commander with community and social programs of the department.
- b) Be chairman of the entertainment programs of the department and shall be a member of the Convention Association.
- c) Prepare and give a report of the above items at each DEC meeting and at the convention and provide a written copy to the Executive Director.
- d) Represent the Commander at all functions in the absence of the Commander, 1st Vice Commander and 2nd Vice Commander.

### **Section 5:**

The **Judge Advocate** shall:

- a) See that actions by the department are in conformity with the National and Department Constitution and Bylaws.
- b) Prepare and give a report of the above items at each DEC meeting and at the convention and provide a written copy to the Executive Director.
- c) Collect from all subordinate organizations a copy of their constitution and bylaws, as amended.
- d) Receive and review all subordinate organizations constitutions and bylaws, as amended.
- e) Submit accepted constitutions and bylaws immediately to National Headquarters, with notation of approval or acceptance.
- f) Assure that subordinate organizations receive a copy of their accepted Constitution and Bylaws, with notation of approval and acceptance.
- g) Subordinate organizations shall be informed, in writing, of the status of their constitutions and bylaws within thirty (30) days of receipt, with an explanation if not approved.
- h) Chair the department Constitution and Bylaws Committee and shall select committee members from the membership of the Department of Washington.
- i) Convene the committee, as required, to consider proposed amendments or revisions to the constitution and bylaws.
- j) That the position of the Deputy Judge Advocate be established and populated by the appointment by the Department Commander. (Amended 2022)

### **Section 6:**

The **Provost Marshall** shall:

- a) Assure that the National colors and other relevant flags and banners are properly displayed at all official department functions.
- b) Ensure that official affairs of the department are conducted with dignity and decorum.
- c) Guard and secure the doors of the convention meeting room when elections are in progress.
- d) At the request of the Commander, escort from the meeting room unruly persons or members.

### **Section 7:**

The **National Executive Committeeman** shall:

- a) Attend all meetings of the National Executive Committee.
- b) Express the sentiments and concerns of the Department of Washington regarding issues before the National Executive Committee.
- c) Keep the Alternate National Executive Committeeman informed concerning events at the NEC meeting.
- d) Provide within 45 days a full and complete written report to the individual's department following the meeting of the National Executive Committee. The report shall be submitted via US postal mail, email, or facsimile to the Department Executive Director.

### **Section 8:**

The **Alternate National Executive Committeeman** shall:

- a) Communicate with the NEC in order to remain informed about issues before the National Executive Committee.
- b) Attend the National Executive Committee meetings, with the NEC, when possible.
- c) Assume the duties of the NEC if primary NEC cannot carry them out.

### **Section 9:**

The **Finance Officer** shall:

The Department Finance Officer shall be the custodian of the funds of the Department. All checks disbursing the funds of the Department shall be signed by two or more persons designated by the Department Commander. The Department Finance Officer shall make reports on the condition of the Department treasury when called for by the Department Commander or Department Executive Committee. The Department will provide a surety bond for said person. The Department Finance Officer shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.

- a) The Department Finance Officer shall submit a financial report at each scheduled DEC meeting and an annual financial report for the current year at the annual Convention.
- b) Prepare an annual budget for submittal to the Finance Committee for consideration at the annual Convention.
- c) Receive and disburse all funds from the department financial accounts, except those funds maintained by the office of the Convention Association.

## **Article V: Duties of Appointed Officers**

### **Section 1:**

The **Department Executive Director** shall:

- a) Be charged with the administration and execution of the National Constitution and Bylaws, the policies and mandates of the Department convention, the Department Executive Committee and the Department Commander and;
- b) Shall supervise the activities of all Departments at the Department Headquarters, issue such directives as may be necessary to such posts; act for the Department Commander during the Department Commander's absence from Department of Washington and perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.
- c) Serve as the secretary of the Department.
- d) Serve at the pleasure of the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee.

### **Section 2:**

The **Historian** shall:

- a) Compile a comprehensive history of the department for each term of office.

- b) Embellish the history with photographs, newspaper clippings and other items of interest.
- c) Provide a summary update report of the ongoing compilation at each meeting of the DEC.
- d) Transfer this memorabilia, in whatever storage form or methodology used, to the department Executive Director after the department convention.

**Section 3:**

The **Chaplain** shall perform such divine and non-sectarian services as may be necessary, adhering to the appropriate ceremonial rituals contained in the AMVETS Chaplains Manual. Discharge such other duties and services incident to the office.

**Section 4:**

The **Department District Commanders** (Eastern and Western) shall:

- a) Exercise delegated authority of the Department Commander to monitor the posts within the department and ensure compliance with post requirements assigned through National and Department Constitution and Bylaws.
- b) Provide training and guidance to Post Commanders, their elected and appointed officers as necessary.
- c) Provide written or oral reports regarding Post operations or performance when requested by the Department Commander.
- d) Summarize Post compliance with requirements at each DEC and Convention meetings.
- e) Accept additional duties as assigned by the Department Commander.
- f) Visit posts within their district as required, assisting posts in all necessary matters.
- g) Assist in organizing new posts within their district.
- h) Hold district meetings at the annual Convention and at the DEC meetings when appropriate.
- i) Assist the Department 1st and 2nd Vice Commanders in the commission of their jobs.
- j) Be accompanied by the Department Commander and/or the immediate Past Department Commander(s) to each Post in their jurisdiction at their monthly meetings this is to be accomplished within the year of their appointment.
- k) Will coordinate the actual Post visits so there are no conflicting scheduling dates.

**Section 5:**

The **Finance Committee Chairman** shall:

- a) Be the Immediate Past Department Commander (Amended 2022)
- b) Chair the Department Finance Committee.
- c) Ensure the Finance Committee meets and complies with the Department Constitution and Bylaws.
- d) Assemble, schedule and chair the Audit Committee, or as directed by the Commander in accordance with ARTICLE VII: FINANCES, for conducting Department and Department Convention financial account audits annually and as requested by the Department Commander.

The annual audit shall be scheduled "Subsequent to the Annual Department Convention and/or Annual Business meeting but prior to August 01 that an audit be conducted by the Audit Committee of the Department financial records, to include the Department financial records, Convention Association and any other records that make up the finances of the Department of Washington". (Amended 2022)

In the event a transition of the Department Commander occurs, the annual audit shall serve as the transition audit.

- 1) The Finance Officer shall provide the Finance Committee Chairman a bank statement or listing of all Department accounts(s)/transactions occurring following the time frame established for the completed annual audit.

- 2) A review of Department account(s)/transactions provided shall be completed by the appointed Finance Committee Chairman for review to ensure compliance with the Department Bylaws.
- 3) In the event of an audit of the Department accounts has not been completed subsequent to the annual Department Convention and/or annual Business meeting but prior to August 01 that an audit be conducted by the Audit Committee of the Department Financial records. To include the Department Financial records, Convention Association and any other records that make up the financing of the Department of Washington. (Amended 2022)
- 4) A review of Department account(s) transactions provided shall be completed by the appointed ?

#### **Section 7:**

The **Communication Director** shall: (added 2/15/23)

- a) Be responsible for the planning, formation and development of the communications program, this is to include publicity, organization, publications and other material.
- b) Be responsible for the efficient and proper liaison with all communications of the media; this includes the press, radio, etc.
- c) Receive, consider and develop resolutions and/or other initiatives concerning all facets of communications between AMVETS, veterans and general public consistent with the long-range plans of AMVETS.
- d) Set the tone for messaging and portray AMVETS values. Be responsible for developing strategic marketing plans and handling of public relation issues that arise internally or externally.
- e) Review, draft and finalize all statements, press releases and other media messaging, i.e., social media.
- f) Serve at the pleasure of the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee.

## **Article VI: Department Executive Committee Meetings**

#### **Section 1:**

The Department Commander shall be the chairman of all meetings of the Department Executive Committee. If the Department Commander is unable to attend a committee, the chairmanship shall pass to the Vice Commanders in a descending order of succession. If none of these officers are present, a legal meeting of the committee cannot be convened.

#### **Section 2:**

The following members in good standing shall be considered members of the Department Executive Committee with a single vote per individual with the exception of the Commander who shall only vote in the event of a tie:

- a) All elected and appointed department officers;
- b) All past department commanders; and
- c) All department post commanders.

#### **Section 3:**

A quorum of the DEC shall be fifty-one percent (51%) of the voting members present, one of whom must be the Department Commander or a department Vice Commander.

#### **Section 4:**

There shall be three DEC meetings per year. Meetings shall be scheduled as follows: Between the 2nd weekend of February and the 3rd weekend of March, during the Department Convention and between the 2nd weekend of October and the 4th weekend of November. When scheduling, the DEC shall consider the most convenient date if a post is hosting the DEC and will avoid dates that conflict with the National Executive Committee meetings (NEC).

**Section 5:**

All meetings of the DEC shall be open, with the exception of disciplinary meetings.

**Section 6:**

Only DEC members shall have a vote. Voice by other members shall be governed by the Chair.

**Section 7:**

The Commander may call special meetings.

- a) Notice of special meetings shall be by written notice, mailed to the address of records of all elected and appointed department officers, post commanders and the President of the Convention Association.
- b) Notice must give the date, time, location and subject of the meeting.

**Section 8:**

Both immediate, past and newly elected DEC members shall attend the 1st post-convention DEC meeting.

**Section 9:**

The order of business at DEC meetings shall be established by the Department Commander.

**Section 10:**

The order of business at the Department convention meeting shall be established by the Department Commander.

## **Article VII: Finances**

**Section 1:**

A checking account and a savings account shall be opened in a financial institution whose accounts are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). All funds received by the department other than those funds maintained in the Convention Association account shall be deposited into these accounts.

**Section 2:**

Funds received for Life Membership shall be deposited into the checking account. Of those funds, thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents (\$37.50) shall be withdrawn for each new Life Membership, and deposited in a life membership designated fund to be invested only in securities protected by the full faith and credit of the United States, and only the income derived from said fund shall be transferred to the general fund for budget use. Withdraw from the principal of the Life Membership fund must be approved by the DEC following the recommendation of the Finance Committee. All investments of the life membership designated fund shall be managed, supervised and directed by the Finance Committee, which is designated as the board of trustees of this life membership designated fund.

**Section 3:**

- a) All funds expended by the Department of Washington except those expended from the account of the Convention Corporation shall be by check or department debit card written against these accounts.
- b) The checks shall be prepared and signed by the Finance Officer and countersigned by the Commander, or in the absence of either or both, two (2) of the authorized member(s) of the DEC as designated by the Commander.

- c) Debit cards shall be used for payment of membership dues, approved recurring bills and bills where a check is not accepted by the vendor or for any payment of an incurred debt approved in writing by the Commander. Each use of a debit card shall be accompanied by a dated invoice, receipt or written explanation that clearly identifies the purpose and vendor.

**Section 4:**

- a) Budgeted funds may be used to reimburse the Department Commander, Executive Director, NEC and alternate NEC for either monthly expenses, National Convention expenses or NEC meeting expenses upon presentation receipt(s) that include the date and vendor name submitted to the Finance Officer within forty-five (45) days of the meeting date. Submissions beyond forty-five (45) days require approval of the Commander.
- b) Funds may be dispersed to authorized officers in advance for monthly expenses, National Convention expenses, or NEC meeting expenses. However, dispersed funds not used for the designated purpose by the authorized officers shall be returned to the Finance Officer within forty-five (45) days after the date of their intended use.
- c) Refer to Appendix C “Reimbursement of Travel, Lodging and Per Diem Expenses” for additional guidance.

**Section 5:**

Debts claimed against the department shall be approved by the Commander before payment. Anyone making expenditures in the name of AMVETS Department of Washington shall be liable for payment until approved by the Commander.

**Section 6:**

- a) The DEC shall, insofar as practical, adhere to the budget adopted or amended by the Finance committee.
- b) Unbudgeted expenditures or transfer of funds from the financial accounts shall be referred to the Finance Committee for approval.

**Section 7:**

The department financial accounts shall be audited annually subsequent to the Annual Department Convention and/or Annual Business meeting but prior to August 01 that an audit be conducted by the Audit Committee of the departments financial records, to include the department financial records, Convention Association and any other records that make up the financing of the Department of Washington (Amended 2022) and upon change or resignation of the Finance Officer, by an audit committee appointed by the Finance Committee Chairman. The committee will be chaired by the Finance Committee Chair and include the Department Executive Director, Finance Officer and two DEC members appointed by the Chairman of the Audit Committee, independent of any department financial/treasury function, who shall be responsible for the review of financial records during the audit.

- a) The Department Commander may request, at his/her discretion, an audit of the department finances.
- b) The Audit Committee shall audit all the Department and Convention Association financial accounts and report the results to the Department Commander.

## **Article VIII: Department Finance Committee**

### **Section 1:**

There shall be a Finance Committee composed of the Finance Committee Chair appointed by the Commander, Finance Officer, Immediate past Department Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander and Judge Advocate.

### **Section 2:**

The management of the Department budget as approved at the department convention shall be under the control of the Department Finance Committee to carry out the usual duties of such committee. The Department Finance Committee, with the approval of the Department Executive Committee, shall have the authority to retain independent investment experts as needed for consultation in supervising any and all AMVETS funds.

The Finance Committee shall:

- a) Meet prior to each DEC meeting, department convention or at other times as determined by the Finance Committee Chairman.
- b) Make an annual report at the department convention. Revenue may be diverted from the annual dues and such other sources as may be approved by the Department Executive Committee.
- c) Submit the provisional annual budget to the Department Convention.
- d) Adopt the fiscal year, September 1 through August 31, to match that of the National Headquarters membership year.

## **Article IX: Charters and Discipline**

New posts shall be chartered as prescribed in Article X of the National Constitution.

The DEC shall:

- a) Comply with Articles IV and V of the National Bylaws if disciplinary action is to be taken against a post or a member.
- b) Follow the "Uniform Code of Procedure for the Suspension or Expulsion of a Member" pursuant to Article V, Section 2, AMVETS National Bylaws will be followed.

## **Article X: Membership**

- a) Annual membership shall be on a calendar year basis and shall run from September 1 and expire on August 31. A member whose dues have not been paid thirty (30) days after expiration shall be suspended. If payment is not made within sixty (60) days of the expiration date, annual membership and all his rights and privileges of membership shall be forfeited.
- b) Concurrent membership in more than one post shall not be allowed.
- c) Department dues shall be approved by the delegates at convention.
- d) The minimum annual membership dues shall not be less than the minimum annual membership dues set forth in the AMVETS National CBL, payable to the Post.
- e) Dues above the minimum set forth in the AMVETS National DBL shall be fixed by the post and/or department.
- f) Appendix B to these bylaws established current amounts for Department and National membership dues, payment methods and procedures.
- g) At least monthly, the Department shall process all membership and dues received directly from posts and Members-at-Large and remit payments to National Headquarters in accordance with Appendix B of these Bylaws.

- h) At least monthly, the Department shall process all membership refunds received from National Headquarters and remit refund payments to Post's in accordance with Appendix F of these Bylaws.

## **Article XI: Convention Association**

### **Section 1:**

The Convention Association shall:

- a) Register with the State of Washington as a non-profit corporation known as: AMVETS Department of Washington Convention Association. Their non-profit status shall be renewed annually.
- b) Conduct financial business of the Department of Washington Convention.
- c) Annually establish a date and location between May and June 30, within the provisions of Section 3 of the Department Constitution, at which all AMVETS Department of Washington delegates shall gather in convention.

### **Section 2:**

The convention fees and payment schedules shall be set the Association as recommended by the Convention Association.

### **Section 3:**

The Convention Association shall:

- a) Adopt its own constitution and bylaws.
- b) Submit a copy of their constitution and bylaws, if revised or amended, to the Department Judge Advocate.

### **Section 4:**

- a) No delegate of a post shall be seated at the department convention unless the respective post shall be fully paid up in all its accounts with department headquarters and department districts.
- b) No post delegates or alternates shall be permitted to register as such unless the delegate or alternate shall have been a member in good standing on the department rolls for at least 30 days prior to the opening of said convention and process a membership card or other satisfactory evidence identifying the delegate or alternate a member of the post which the individual is registering.

## **Article XII: Districts**

- a) The term of office for appointed District Commanders shall be one (1) year from department convention to the next department convention.
- b) They may be appointed for a successive term upon approval of the DEC at a regularly scheduled DEC.
- c) They shall be authorized to wear a state AMVETS hat embroidered with lettering "District Commander-Eastern Washington" and their term of office (years); or "District Commander-Western Washington" and their term of office (years); dependent upon of which district they are Commander.

## **Article XIII: Posts**

- a) Posts shall be governed by their own officers, according to their own constitution and bylaws.
- b) Election of officers shall be held annually between May 1 and June 30.
- c) Officers shall be installed no later than July 1.
- d) Posts shall be subject and subordinate to the jurisdiction of the National and Department Headquarters.

- e) Provisions of post Constitution and Bylaws found to be in conflict with or contrary to the provisions of the National Constitution or the Department Bylaws shall be null and void.
- f) Officers of the posts shall use equivalent titles provided for department officers in the National Constitution or the Department Bylaws.
- g) Posts shall revalidate their charter annually prior to July 1 by completing the form prescribed by AMVETS National Headquarters and submit a copy to Department Headquarters.
- h) Department Headquarters shall submit a copy of each form received from posts to AMVETS National Headquarters prior to July 15.
- i) Any post failing to supply certification of officers to department headquarters on the forms provided for this purpose before July 1, shall have their charters considered in a state of suspension and shall be subject to disciplinary action as prescribed by the DEC and/or the National Constitution and Bylaws.
- j) The post Judge Advocate shall transmit a copy of the Post Constitution and Bylaws, if revised or amended, to the Department Judge Advocate.
- k) Each post will, if possible, have an officers training course made available to its elected and appointed officers. All officers should complete this course.
- l) Posts shall register with the State of Washington as non-profit organization and shall renew their non-profit status annually.
- m) Each post shall certify to department annually by March 31 that an audit(s) of their post financial accounts has been completed, utilizing the form prescribed by and supplied by the department. (See Appendix A for form)

#### **Article XIV: Ladies Auxiliary**

AMVETS Department of Washington Ladies Auxiliary shall adhere to the provisions of the National Organizations Constitution and Bylaws.

#### **Article XV: Junior AMVETS**

- a) Membership in Junior AMVETS shall be limited to persons qualified under National Bylaws.
- b) Local posts are authorized and encouraged to establish a Junior AMVETS organization within their posts.
- c) They shall transmit a copy of the annual charter revalidation to the Department Executive Director within thirty (3) days of receipt from National Headquarters.

#### **Article XVI: Sons of AMVETS**

- a) Membership in the Sons of AMVETS shall be limited to persons qualified under National Bylaws.
- b) Local posts are authorized and encouraged to establish a Sons of AMVETS organization within their posts.
- c) They shall transmit a copy of the annual charter revalidation to the Department Executive Director within thirty (3) days of receipt from National Headquarters.

#### **Article XVII: Parliamentary Authority**

Procedures, not otherwise provided herein, shall be conducted pursuant to the current copy of "Robert Rules of Order," newly revised.

## **Article XVIII: Amendment**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting at a Department of Washington convention and also at the DEC meetings, provided the proposed amendments have been submitted by the Department Executive Director and the Judge Advocate at least thirty (30) days prior to the convening of the convention or DEC meeting. Amendment may be affected, without previous notification by a unanimous vote of delegates present and voting. Approved amendments become effective the day following adjournment of the Department Convention.

De minimis corrections to spelling, grammar, titles, reference, dates, or times necessary to ensure clarity of intent may be requested by any member. Such changes may be made by the Judge Advocate without resolution or amendment and may be affected outside of convention or DEC and without a vote of delegates.

**Article XIX: Authentication**

We the undersigned, certify that the foregoing Bylaws are a true and correct copy as amended and adopted by the members present and voting at the AMVETS Department of Washington Convention or DEC. The adopted amendments have been included within this revision.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Kelley Byers**  
**Department Commander**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Glenn Skinner**  
**Department Executive Director**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Charles Wharton**  
**Department Judge Advocate**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX A: Certification of Annual Financial Audit

AMVETS, Department of Washington<sup>3</sup>

In accordance with the National AMVETS Bylaws, the AMVETS Department of Washington has devised an audit process to meet and/or exceed the National requirements and to guide the Department, Convention Association and all Posts in meeting their responsibility to audit financial accounts annually before subsequent to the Annual Department Convention and/or Annual Business meeting but prior to August 01 that an audit be conducted by the Audit Committee of the Departments financial records to include the Department financial records, Convention Association records and any other records that make up the financing of the Department of Washington (amended 2022) or as otherwise required according to Department Bylaws, Article VII: Finances and Article XIII: Posts. The process below contains minimal expectations and may be augmented with additional steps required by Department/Post bylaws and/or appropriate to specific or programs and/or state and federal grantors. This form shall be completed and forwarded to the Department Commander through the Executive Director following each financial audit.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Department/Post Commander appoints two executive members who are independent of any financial/treasury function to conduct the audit.
- 2) For an annual or specific time audits, the following documents are to be made available by the Finance Officer/Treasurer and/or the Adjutant/Executive Director:
  - All monthly bank statements indicating beginning and ending balances, cleared checks, debits and deposits;
  - All check registries or copies of written checks;
  - All deposit slips; and
  - All receipts explaining debits or deposits (receipts for reimbursement must comply with Department or Post bylaws).
- 3) Reconcile all bank statements to confirm ending balances.
- 4) Review and confirm correctness of any large expenses, i.e., proper authorization, receipts, etc.
- 5) If required, review expenses associated with all grant monies received; and revenue and expenses associated with charitable games/bingo.

I, the undersigned, certify to AMVETS Department of Washington Commander, that the financial audit of the following financial account has been performed in accordance with these instruction.

Describe the Dept/Post financial account audited (e.g., post checking account).

\_\_\_\_\_

Check the statement fellow which best indicates the outcome of the audit:

\_\_\_\_ Account reconciles, and no unresolved discrepancies noted.

\_\_\_\_ Account not reconciles or significant discrepancies were noted (attach report of discrepancies and proposed actions).

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

<sup>3</sup> Appendix A: Amended October 12, 2019

## APPENDIX B: Membership Dues

### Minimum Dues

New annual membership:	\$30 (\$15 to National; \$15 to Dept)
New Member at Large (MAL):	\$30 (\$15 to National; \$15 to Dept)
Member Annual renewal & MAL:	\$30 (\$15 to National; \$15 to Dept)

New Language—Article VII: Monies and Collections, Section 6, National Bylaws:  
Life membership dues, effective September 1, 2023, shall be not less than \$500 for those members age up to and including 55, ages 56 through and including 65 will be \$400 and those 66 and over \$300, nonrefundable, and payable to the post, of which 50 percent shall be forwarded to National Headquarters and 25 percent to the state department.

Dues above the minimum set forth herein shall be fixed by the post and/or department. Where no department exists, 75 percent shall be forwarded to National Headquarters. Of the 75 percent sent to National Headquarters, the department's 25 percent share shall be delivered into the unorganized department fund for development of future departments.

Monies sent to the national department shall be held in a life membership designated fund to be invested only in securities protected by the full faith and credit of the United States, and only the income derived from said fund shall be transferred to the general fund for 48 budget use.

### Payment Methods and Procedures

- For new annual and annual renewals, posts shall remit payments by check to Department Headquarters, or by debit/credit card through the AMVETS National website.
- For new Life Membership, posts shall remit payments by check to Department Headquarters, or by debit/credit card through the AMVETS National website.
- For Life Membership conversions, posts shall remit payments by check to Department Headquarters. *(At time of approval for this Appendix, the National website did not have a payment procedure for Life Membership conversion payments.)*

### Payment Procedures

- Check(s) for dues shall identify the *purpose* on the check or in a separate note., e.g., the number and type of membership for how the payment is to be applied.
- Check(s) for Life Membership or Life Membership conversion submitted to the department shall include two copies of the Life Membership Transmittal Form completed by the Post.

Check(s) should be made out to AMVETS Department of Washington and mailed or delivered to AMVETS Department of Washington, ATTN: Department Executive Director, 5717 S. Tyler St, Tacoma, WA 98409.

Members, Post and Department officers designated to do so, may pay membership renewal dues online through the AMVETS database.

Department and Post Leaders with automatic access to remit payment online:

#### Post Leaders with Access

Post Commanders  
Post 1st Vice  
Post Adjutant

#### Department Leaders with Access

Department Commander  
Department 1st Vice  
Department Adjutant

The Commander may request from National “special access” for Department/Post leaders, if required.

## **APPENDIX C: Reimbursement of Travel Lodging and Per Diem Expenses**

- 1) No travel or per diem expenses for attending required National or Department meetings shall be paid out by the Finance Officer in advance, without written pre-approval of the Commander certifying a financial hardship exists that would prevent attendance.
- 2) Claims for reimbursement of travel expenses for National or Department meetings within 50 miles (road miles) of the member's home of record must be approved by the Commander.
- 3) No claims for reimbursement of expenses will be paid without appropriate receipts as defined.
- 4) No reimbursement for alcoholic beverages or hotel stays extending more than one day before or after a National or Department meeting.
- 5) AMVETS members shall not submit travel or per diem expenses to the Finance Officer that have already been paid or provided as gratuity by the National AMVETS organization, the Department Auxiliary, Convention Association or a post within the Department.
- 6) Copied travel per diem or hotel receipts submitted with the intent to "double bill" the department will be considered inappropriate and may constitute dishonesty on the part of the member.

## **APPENDIX D: Department Executive Director**

That the position of Department Executive Director be populated with the following work criteria:

1. The Department Executive Director shall be charged with the administration and execution of the National Constitution and Bylaws.
2. The policies and mandates of the Department Convention, the Department Executive Committee and the Department Commander shall supervise the activities of all Departments at Department Headquarters, issue such directives as necessary to such posts; act for the Department Commander during the Department Commanders' absence from the Department of Washington and perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.
3. The Department Executive Director shall serve as the secretary of the Department.
4. The Department Executive Director will serve at the pleasure of the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee.
5. The Department Commander, with the consent of a Post's Commander will assign to the Department of Washington Executive Director who as specific administrative expertise, online access to assist or manage Post completion, filing and payment for completion of the annual IRS Form 990N, and the Washington State Annual non-profit status. All costs associated with this passage are the responsibility of the said Post.

## **APPENDIX E: Council of Past Department Commanders**

- 1) That the Department of Washington recognize the organization known as the Council of Past Department Commanders, this committee will be chaired by the immediate past Department Commander.
- 2) The Council of Past Department Commanders shall meet at the call of the Council Chairperson and shall also present annually a written report to the Department Commander.
- 3) That the Council shall be on call by the Department Commander and the elected and appointed Officers of the Department of Washington to be a reference to the history of the Department.
- 4) That the Council of Past Department Commanders shall be an advisory and overview council to consider all facets of the organization; to an advisory and overview council to consider all facets of the organization; to maintain unity and harmony and to develop matters pertaining to the good and welfare of AMVETS Department of Washington.
- 5) The suggestion and recommendations of the Council of Past Commanders shall be reported at the DEC or Department Convention for further consideration and action.

## **APPENDIX F: ROTC and JROTC Committee**

1. That a committee be comprised of the 2nd Vice Commander, 3rd Vice Commander, Finance Officer, Eastern and Western District Commanders, Department Commander and the immediate Past District Commander shall be formed.
2. That the committee chairperson be selected by the Department Commander.
3. The Finance Director will order the medals and certificates.
4. That the committee chairperson, with the assistance of the 2nd Vice Commander, will identify the educational facilities that have either ROTC or JROTC's, and provide the names, addresses and telephone numbers to the committee who will make contact with the educational facilities to identify the date and time of the actual presentation.
5. That the certificates be forwarded to the Department Commander to his/her designee for his/her signature.
6. That the list of eligible educational facilities with their names, addresses and telephone numbers and dates and times of presentations with the medal and certificates be sent to the Eastern and Western District Commander.
7. That the Eastern and Western District Commanders will set up distribution and presenters for the educational facilities, medals and certificates will not be mailed but will be hand delivered for the presentations.

## APPENDIX G: Video Teleconference Guidelines

(Updated September 20, 2020)

Anytime a meeting is held, whether in person or via teleconference, the AMVETS Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules of Order will be used.

Teleconferencing might be complicated and there will be distractions. Be patient and consider that there might be voice time delays, clarity and background noise from attendees and moderator. When this happens, pause and ask for clarification.

The following guidelines have been assembled from a review of several online resources as a guide to assist in having an effective meeting.

### Attendees

Practice impeccable phone etiquette—there is nothing worse on a call than background noise (typing and side conversations can be heard). Background noise is rude and can kill the mojo of the call.

When you first connect to a teleconference either by video or voice, **you will need to mute your line**. Unmute your line when you are asked or if you have a question. When you do speak, identify yourself **each time** for those who call in and cannot see who is talking.

If you are calling in by phone for a video conference, you need to identify yourself when you are asked. Your information will be changed so those who are on the video conference can identify you.

During the Pledge of Allegiance and Opening Prayer **keep your line muted**. The Pledge of Allegiance will be conducted by the Provost Marshall and the Opening Prayer conducted by the Chaplain. You can still participate even though you are muted.

Connect 10-15 minutes before the meeting. This will help the meeting start on time and troubleshoot any issues. Do not wait until the last minute!

If you are a new member, contact the Communications Director to help you through the process before the meeting day.

### Chair or Moderator

Schedule your meetings with the Communications Director or Executive Director. Time slots might not be available due to conflicts with the Communications Director or Executive Director's time. Do not make an agenda until you have actually scheduled a time slot.

You will be provided the conference call-in or connect procedures. It will be your responsibility to provide that information to the attendees well in advance to your meeting.

The Communications Director or Executive Director will start the meeting 30 minutes before the schedule meeting time. This will give you time to troubleshoot any issues beforehand and will allow you time to get organized before your attendees start to call in.

**There must be an agenda** – Not only must there be an agenda, but it needs to be in front of everyone. The agenda keeps the meeting on track and allows all on the call to know the purpose of the call.

The host should have everyone muted except for the one person identified to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, invocation and roll call. When you are doing roll call, ask the attendee to respond with their name and then mute them. When the attendees announce their name it will help those who call in know who is in attendance since they cannot see the screen.

**Address people by name when you speak to them.** Again, because you have no visual cues, if you simply ask a question or make a remark without indicating to whom you're speaking, other participants may have trouble determining who's being addressed.

**Direct questions to a specific person instead of posing them to the audience at large.** Doing so helps prevent confusion and helps ensure that your question is met with an answer rather than just silence as everyone tries to figure out who is going to respond.

**Gaining the floor or making a motion can be difficult during a teleconference** since the chairman cannot see a raised hand, they must lead a fair and equitable process. If the agenda allows for new business or will require a motion the moderator should lead the process as follows:

- If a motion to approve an agenda item the moderator should direct the request for the motion to a specific attendee or all attendees. Once an attendee moves that the item be approved then the moderator can follow the same process for a second on the motion. If discussion is required then a time limit is given and each attendee is asked if they would like the floor with the process proceeds until all have been the floor. If amendments are in order the same process can be followed. The same procedures above can be followed for new business, good of the order etc. if allowed by the agenda.
- The roll call for the vote follows as described previously.

Parliamentary inquiries such as "point of order" necessary and could be minimized early on by polling the attendees in advance regarding agenda items before the meeting and during a roll call for vote.

### **Conclusion**

If more than one person is in-charge of something, then no one is. A conference call is held because a group is trying to accomplish a task. Ensure that each part of that task is owned by someone. Then hold them accountable for the results.