CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES

Constitution and Bylaws provide the governance structure for the organization and how it will function. It includes the basic rules that are so important that they cannot be changed without prior notice. A unit, district or department constitution & bylaws may be patterned after and cannot be in conflict with the American Legion Auxiliary's National Constitution & Bylaws. These documents provide better understanding of what the Auxiliary is all about and has rules for a better and rewarding experience within the organization.

We always begin our constitution with our Preamble followed by the Name, Nature, Membership, Officers, Meetings, Governing Board, Convention and Amendments. Breaking it down a little more, governing documents provide details on who is eligible for membership and types of membership, who can vote; the officers you will have. How they are nominated, elected, the term in office, how vacancies are filled; how discipline is handled; types of meetings, how they will be called, the quorum needed to transact business; if an executive board will exist, its composition and authority. You can use the Department Constitution as an example. The IRS does not like the constitution to be changed, so you want to be careful with what you put into it.

The bylaws break down the organization of the Department into Units with explanations of their membership, what officers they may have and what happens when they cease to function. How officers are elected, who is appointed, length of office. Duties of the officers, meetings, quorums, appointment of committees, revenue, discipline and how these documents can be amended. Quorum numbers and dues amounts should be as stated in standing rules. Bylaws should not be changed often; maybe every five years.

Standing Rules are even more detailed about administrative policies and can be changed as needed except where noted. Anything that has to do with numbers (as listed below) that we may want to change more frequently than in the bylaws should go here. They can include what functions your Unit President will attend; what your Senior Vice President's duties are and what she should attend; what your quorum is for your meetings; the amount of your dues; your fiscal year; what committees you will have and what they need to accomplish.

STATE Law – the laws of the State supersede everything. It is the responsibility of each unit or district to ensure their governing documents comply with the laws of their state.

Please call or email this committee if you have any questions or need help.

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