

**RULES OF THE  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**of**

THE AMERICAN LEGION



*Adopted by the  
National Executive Committee  
November 21-22, 1940*

**Revised May 9-10, 2012**

Rules of the  
National Executive Committee  
Adopted November 21-22, 1940

Amended as follows:

May 1-2, 1941

December 13-15, 1945

November 18-20, 1948

May 4-6, 1949

November 17-19, 1950

November 18-20, 1951

May 4-5, 1960

May 1-2, 1963

October 9-10, 1974

May 3-4, 1976

October 12-13, 1988

May 7-8, 2008

October 12-13, 2011

May 9-10, 2012

# **RULES OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The following rules are based upon the report of the Special Code of Procedure Subcommittee of the National Executive Committee, as adopted at the November 21-22, 1940, meeting, to take effect ten days from the date of such adoption, and amended at the May 1-2, 1941; December 13-15, 1945; November 18-20, 1948; May 4-6, 1949; November 17-19, 1950; November 18-20, 1951; May 4-5, 1960; May 1-2, 1963; October 9-10, 1974; May 3-4, 1976; October 12-13, 1988; May 7-8, 2008; October 12-13, 2011; and May 9-10, 2012 meetings of the National Executive Committee.

DANIEL S. WHEELER  
National Adjutant

## **Rule 1 Self-Governing**

The National Executive Committee of The American Legion, as provided by the National Constitution of The American Legion, shall be a self-governing committee and transact business in accordance with the rules hereinafter set forth, subject only to the Constitution and By-Laws of The American Legion and mandates of the National Conventions.

## **Rule 2 Officers**

The National Commander shall be the Chairman of the National Executive Committee, and the National Adjutant shall serve as Secretary. Any temporary vacancies, in such offices of Chairman and Secretary, shall be filled by action of the Committee, for the respective meeting in which the vacancy occurs.

### **Rule 3**

#### **Duties and Powers**

The National Executive Committee is specifically empowered to exercise the following powers and rights, and may delegate to any subcommittee composed of members of the National Executive Committee authority to investigate and report back to the Committee on any of the following powers and rights:

a. To make decisions on all matters, executive or administrative: Provided, however, That the said action so taken shall not be contrary to, nor in derogation of, actions of the National Convention, except as provided by the resolution adopted at the Cleveland National Convention in 1936, as follows:

“Resolved, That any policy adopted by the National Organization of The American Legion by convention action shall be a mandate during the year of its adoption and thereafter shall continue as the national policy of the National Organization unless changed by subsequent Convention action or by action of the National Executive Committee,” except that mandates pertaining to legislative action by the Congress of the United States shall be effective only to the date of final adjournment of the Congress during which such resolutions were adopted by a National Convention or the National Executive Committee, except that resolutions passed at the National Convention or the National Executive Committee meeting preceding the convening of a new Congress shall be effective until the adjournment of such new Congress.

b. To determine the number of members of all National Commissions, National Committees, Boards or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee created by the National Commander not in conflict with the Constitution and By-Laws of The American Legion or the National Executive Committee and to ratify the appointments made by the National Commander. Such National Commissions,

National Committees, Boards or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee shall receive full instructions from the National Executive Committee by resolution specifying their purpose, scope, function and authority, and each National Commission, Board or Subcommittee of the National Executive Committee which has met since the last meeting of the National Executive Committee and at least three weeks prior to the next ensuing meeting of the National Executive Committee shall prepare preliminary reports for distribution by the National Adjutant to members of the National Executive Committee preceding any meeting, regular or special.

c. Upon any report made to the National Executive Committee by any National Commission, National Committee, Boards or Subcommittee of the National Executive Committee and containing any recommendation as to the future conduct, or as to the future policy of matters within their scope, the receiving, accepting or approval of such report shall not mean the adoption of such recommendations and each specific recommendation as to future conduct or as to future policy shall be embodied in a separate resolution for the consideration and action of the National Executive Committee.

d. To make decisions when necessary, relative to expenditures for which appropriations have been made by the National Executive Committee and to make emergency appropriations necessary to implement action by the National Executive Committee.

e. To make appropriations from funds not otherwise appropriated of such additional amounts as may be recognized as emergency requirements.

f. To explore matters requiring the attention of the National Executive Committee and offer recommendations thereon to the National Executive Committee.

g. To advise the officers or National Commissions with regard to problems arising in the performance of their duties or functions.

h. In general, to perform between National Conventions any and all actions necessary and consistent with the exercise of administrative power by the National Executive Committee.

## **Rule 4**

### **Powers of the Committee Over Its Members**

a. If a quorum is not present, the National Commander may order a call of the National Executive Committee and send for the absentees.

b. In the case a less number than a quorum of the National Executive Committee shall convene, those present are hereby authorized to send the Sergeant-at-Arms, or any other person or persons by them authorized, for any and all absent members present within the city where the meeting is being held. And this rule shall apply, as well to the first meeting of the National Executive Committee at the legal time of the meeting, as to each day of the session, after the hour has arrived, to which the National Executive Committee stood adjourned.

## **Rule 5**

### **Decorum**

a. No member of the National Executive Committee, or other person except the Secretary and his assistants, shall visit or remain by the Secretary's table while the yeas and nays are being called or counted.

b. No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject without leave of the National Executive Committee; nor more than once until every member choosing to speak shall have spoken.

c. While the Commander is reporting or putting a question, none shall entertain private discourse, read, stand up, walk into, out of, or across the National Executive Committee room.

d. No question shall be debated until it has been pro-

pounded by the Chair, and then the mover shall have the right to explain his views, in preference to any other member.

e. While the Commander is putting the question, any member who has not spoken before to the matter may speak to the question before the negative is put.

f. During any debate, any National Executive Committeeman, though he has spoken to the matter, may arise and speak to the orders of the National Executive Committee if they be transgressed, in case the Commander does not; but if the Commander stands up at any time, he is first to be heard.

g. Whenever the National Executive Committeemen and the Alternate National Executive Committeemen from any Department shall be absent from any meeting or session of the National Executive Committee, the courtesy of the floor may be granted to an accredited representative of the Department not represented; provided, however, that the right to vote shall not be transferred or delegated.

h. Whenever a division of vote is to be determined on any question before the National Executive Committee, the Presiding Officer may determine division by:

1. Viva Voce vote, with right of recourse to a “teller vote” or “roll call vote” as hereinafter provided.
2. A teller vote whereby the yeas and nays may be counted by a rising vote with recourse to a roll call vote as hereinafter provided.
3. A roll call vote may be directed by the Presiding Officer to determine a division of vote on any question. A roll call vote shall be taken upon the request of three members.
4. On any Viva Voce vote or teller vote, any member of the National Executive Committee shall have his vote recorded upon his request.

## **Rule 6**

### **Committee of the Whole**

a. When the National Executive Committee shall resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole, the Commander shall leave the chair and appoint a chairman to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

b. The Committee of the Whole shall consider and report on such subjects as may be committed to it by the National Executive Committee. The rules of the National Executive Committee shall be observed in the Committee of the Whole so far as they are applicable, except the rule limiting the time of speaking, concerning the previous question, and taking the yeas and nays. The proceedings in the Committee of the Whole shall not be recorded on the minutes of the National Executive Committee, excepting so far as they are reported to the National Executive Committee by the chairman of the Committee of the Whole.

## **Rule 7**

### **Order of Business**

The order of business of the National Executive Committee shall be:

1. Salute to Colors
2. The Invocation
3. POW-MIA Remembrance Ceremony
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Preamble
6. Roll Call
7. Read the minutes of the former meeting
8. Dispose of letters or communications
9. Receive reports from National Officers of The American Legion
10. Receive reports from National Commissions, National Committees, Boards and Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee
11. Receive resolutions, motions and petitions



12. Act upon unfinished business of the preceding day and resolutions lying over from the previous day
13. Appointments of members of standing or special Commissions, Committees, Boards or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee
14. Miscellaneous business
15. Benediction
16. Salute to Colors.

### **Rule 8-a** **Fiscal Policy**

All matters of business affecting the fiscal policy of The American Legion, or financial matters outside the scope of mandates of the National Convention, including the making, cancellation, abrogation or modification of any contract to which the National Organization is a party, shall be considered under a first and second reading, with not less than four hours intervening. The second reading of the said matter so presented shall be held not less than four hours after the first reading of the matter under submission, and it shall be required that the subject matter, i.e., the motion or resolution or report be printed, typewritten or mimeographed, and a copy thereof placed on the desk of each National Executive Committeeman attending said meeting, at the time of the first reading, for the purpose of consideration of such motion, resolution, or report between the first and second reading. Final action shall be taken only upon the second reading thereof; Provided, however, That matters and resolutions approved by and contained in the report of the National Finance Commission with favorable recommendation for immediate action may be considered at the time of the report of said National Finance Commission.

## **Rule 8-b**

### **Legislative Program**

Any resolution adopted by the National Convention or the National Executive Committee which seeks action by the Congress of the United States, or is a legislative policy statement of The American Legion, shall upon its adoption immediately become part of The American Legion's Legislative Program, and shall remain in full force and effect only during the life of the Congress to which it relates. The National Legislative Commission shall compile such resolutions and make the current compilation part of its report to the National Executive Committee for the sole purpose of establishing an orderly historical record of resolutions stating legislative policy and/or requiring legislative action.

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**NOTE:** All prior versions of Rule 8-b of the Rules of the National Executive Committee are, hereby, superseded and rescinded.

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## **Rule 9**

### **Procedure**

a. Letters and communications addressed to the National Executive Committee or to the National Commander, the National Adjutant or any other National Officer and by them referred to the National Executive Committee shall be read (or published to the members, if such be of import) by the National Adjutant. Such letters or communications shall be disposed of in one of the following ways:

1. By a motion to accept. Such a motion shall have the effect of approving the subject matter and should include specific instructions for further disposition, i.e., by directions of the National Commander, National Adjutant or other proper officer; by reference to an appropriate Commission or Committee or other proper instruction.
2. By a motion to receive and file. Such a motion shall denote neither approval nor disapproval of the subject matter and shall require no action on the part of National Officers or others beyond a formal reply should such be required.
3. By a motion to reject or decline. Such a motion shall mean disapproval and should include specific instructions for further disposition as contemplated in paragraph 1 above.

b. Reports of officers shall be acted upon directly by the National Executive Committee, except that by direction of the National Executive Committee a report of any officer may be referred to a Subcommittee of the National Executive Committee for study and report thereon: Provided, however, That such reference shall not continue beyond the meeting of the National Executive Committee to which such officer's report is first submitted.

Reports of officers shall not be altered or amended by the National Executive Committee nor may any such re-

port be rejected. In the event that the National Executive Committee shall not agree with the report or any statement herein contained, then, and in such event, if the presiding officer or the Executive Committee so determines, a separate memorandum shall be prepared setting forth the objections, which such memorandum, if approved by the National Executive Committee, shall be filed with the report. Any such memorandum, when submitted, shall be subject to amendment.

Reports of officers shall be disposed by motion as follows:

1. To approve the report. Such action shall constitute approval of the statements made in the report.
2. To disapprove the report. Such motion shall have the effect of disapproving any or all statements of the report, but such motion shall prevail only in the event that a memorandum setting forth the objections to such report shall have been adopted.
3. To receive and file the report. Such action shall constitute only a routine disposition of the report. A negative vote on motions 1 and 2 shall automatically cause the report to be received and filed.

c. Reports of National Commissions shall include a report of the National Committees assigned to them, except that for good reasons by direction of the National Commander a National Committee may report direct to the National Executive Committee.

Reports of National Commissions, National Committees, Boards or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee shall be received and shall then be subject to disposition on the following motions:

1. To approve the report. Such action shall constitute approval of the statements made in the report subject to the procedure outlined in Rule 3-c of the rules of this committee.
2. To receive and file the report. Such action shall constitute only a routine disposition of the report.

3. To re-commit the report. Such action shall return the report to the Commission or the Committee of origin for further study and report and may be accompanied by specific instructions.
4. To commit the report to a special Subcommittee of the National Executive Committee. Such action shall contemplate specific study and such Subcommittee shall return the report with recommendations.
5. To commit to the Committee of the Whole. Upon adoption of such a motion, the National Executive Committee shall resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole and may thereafter alter or amend the report in whole or in part. The results of such action, however, shall again be submitted to the National Executive Committee for final disposition.

A negative vote on motion 1 shall automatically cause the report to be received and filed.

d. Any member of the National Executive Committee shall be privileged to present a resolution in his own right in any of the following ways:

1. Under a proper order of business, in which case of the subject matter thereof shall be germane.
2. Under miscellaneous business.
3. Upon unanimous consent of the Committee at any session of the National Executive Committee, at an appropriate interval in the order of business.
4. Under a suspension of the rules.

e. All National Commissions, National Committees, Boards or Subcommittees of the National Executive Committee shall be required to present in resolution form all recommendations as to their future conduct or future policy as to matters within their scope and functions upon which it is desired or required that the National Executive Committee take action as contemplated in Rule 3. paragraph c. Such resolutions shall be filed with the Subcommittee on Resolutions prior to the first session of any

meeting of the National Executive Committee at which action thereon is contemplated.

The Subcommittee on Resolutions shall report such resolutions to the National Executive Committee with appropriate recommendations immediately following the disposition of the report of the National Commission or Committee concerned.

f. Matters emanating from Posts, Departments or other sources and from the American Legion Auxiliary shall be defined and classified as:

#### 1. LEGION-SPONSORED MATTERS

a. Resolutions of properly constituted American Legion organizations, to wit: Posts and intermediate bodies (which have been approved by their Department Convention or Department Executive Committee), Department Executive Committee, Department Convention, National Convention or resolutions submitted by any National Commission or Committee.

b. Resolutions emanating from the National Organization of the American Legion Auxiliary or any other official component thereof.

c. Official communications of the National Officers of The American Legion.

#### 2. OFFICIAL MATTERS

Official Matters are those which originate with American Legion officers or officials such as Commanders or other officers of Posts, intermediate bodies, Departments or the President of the National Organization of the American Legion Auxiliary.

#### 3. GENERAL MATTERS

General matters are those which originate with individual members of The American Legion, individual citizens or as a result of communications for organizations or their officials not affiliated with The American Legion or from agencies of Government.

Such matters shall be disposed of as follows:

Whenever matters or communications are received at

the National Headquarters of The American Legion, the National Adjutant shall analyze the subject matter and take action in one or more of the following ways:

a. Determine, in accordance with his good judgment, whether or not such matter or communication is basically administrative in nature, and if so, refer the matter to the appropriate Administrator, Director, or Executive for disposition.

b. If in the judgment of the National Adjutant the subject matter be of primary concern to or related to a program or function of one of the National Commissions, he shall refer the same to the appropriate Commission for action or for consideration by the Commission looking toward presentation to the National Executive Committee.

c. Matters which do not fall within the above classifications or which in the opinion of the National Commander or the National Adjutant involve questions of organizational policy of sufficient importance to be considered directly by the National Executive Committee shall be referred to the Subcommittee on Resolutions of the National Executive Committee for disposition.

d. The National Executive Committee, with the exception of the latitude in paragraph c above, will directly consider only matters which bear the prior approval of a Department Convention or Department Executive Committee, or referred to it by the National Convention, or which may be recommended to it by the National Commander, or be presented to it through the governing body of the American Legion Auxiliary. All other matters, as hereinbefore defined, which do not have the sponsorship specified in this paragraph may become eligible for consideration by the National Executive Committee only in the event that they have been recommended for approval to the National Executive Committee by a National Commission of The American Legion.

e. The National Adjutant shall keep and maintain a register of all matters officially received from a Depart-

ment (i.e., from any Department Convention, Department Executive Committee) or sponsored by a National Executive Committeeman, referred to Commissions, and shall report these referrals to the National Executive Committee in written form at the regular meetings of the National Executive Committee which occur within 45 days after the adjournment of the National Convention (unless such time is extended by the National Commander for sufficient reasons to him appearing upon the approval of the National Executive Committee) and in May of each year in order that National Executive Committeemen from the respective Departments shall be informed of the referrals previously made concerning matters which originate within their respective Departments. This register will be continuous from meeting to meeting and continue to list a subject once placed thereon until it is reported as disposed of.

f. National Commissions when submitting their reports to the National Executive Committee shall include therein a record of the disposition of all matters previously referred to them and shall designate each by its register number if in that category. Resolutions referred to Commissions and upon which such Commissions shall have acted in an administrative or in such other manner or shall satisfy the purport of the resolution need only be reported to National Executive Committee as to disposition. Resolutions referred to Commissions for study and report and referred by such Commissions to the National Executive Committee for final action shall be filed with the Subcommittee on Resolutions as contemplated in paragraph e above, with recommendation as to their disposition.



## **Rule 10**

### **Form of Resolutions**

a. Resolutions which shall be offered as the direct action of the National Executive Committee shall be prepared in appropriate form containing such informative preamble in the form of "Whereas" followed by statements of fact and shall conclude with a Resolving clause or clauses which shall specifically set forth what statement or declaration is to receive action of the National Executive Committee. Such Resolving clause or clauses shall contain the following leading language:

"RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular (or special) meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana (or other place), on (date or dates), That, etc.-and be it further  
"RESOLVED, That, etc."

b. Resolutions of Posts, intermediate bodies or other officially constituted subordinate organization which shall have received favorable action by their respective Department Conventions or Executive Committee and which shall have an appropriate endorsement thereof in resolution form shall be acted upon by the National Executive Committee in the form of a final Resolving clause in the following leading language:

"And be it finally Resolved, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular (or special) meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana (or other place), on (date or dates), That, etc."

c. Resolutions of Department Conventions or Department Executive Committees shall be similarly acted upon by the National Executive Committee in the form of a final Resolving clause as contemplated in paragraph b above.

## **Rule 11**

### **Subcommittee on Resolutions**

The Subcommittee on Resolutions of the National Executive Committee shall meet at least two days prior to any regular meeting of the National Executive Committee held in May and October of each year or any adjournment thereof.

The Subcommittee shall prepare a digest and such supplements thereto as may be necessary of all resolutions considered by it and for presentation to this Committee, together with the recommendation of the Subcommittee.

The digest of resolutions and supplements thereto shall be placed on the desk of each Committeeman at the opening of the various sessions.

The Subcommittee shall have the cooperation of all officers, employees and members of Committees and Commissions to obtain such information, facts and advice as it may deem necessary to carry out its responsibilities and duties.

The Subcommittee shall have authority to alter, amend, redraft or substitute for any resolution submitted to it for presentation to the National Executive Committee; Provided, however, That the Subcommittee shall report the original resolution and its reason for any change.

## **Rule 12**

### **Transaction of Business by Mail, E-mail or by Telephone**

The National Executive Committee, without meeting together, may transact business by mail or by e-mail or by telephone on a matter of extreme urgency not involving the establishment of any new policy and on which action cannot be delayed to the next regular meeting, by voting upon proposed resolutions mailed or e-mailed or telephoned to them by the National Adjutant, with the ap-

proval of the National Commander. Thirty days shall be allowed for the return, by mail or e-mail or telephone, of the votes thereon to the National Adjutant. The voting shall be considered closed at the end of the thirty days: Provided, That three-fourths of the members of the National Executive Committee have returned their votes by that time, or it shall be considered closed at any time prior thereto if and when all the members shall have returned their votes: Provided, further, That in the event one-third of the committee in writing, objects to the ballot by mail or by e-mail or by telephone, the matter shall not be decided and will be considered as the first order of business at the next regular or special meeting: Provided, further, That votes by e-mail shall be confirmed by mail by the National Adjutant to the NECman voting and: Provided, further, That thereafter the National Adjutant shall notify the committee of the action taken.

### **Rule 13**

#### **Suspension of Rule**

No standing rule or order of the National Executive Committee shall be suspended without one hour's notice being given of the motion therefor, and no rule shall be suspended except by a vote of two-thirds of all members present.

### **Rule 14**

#### **Robert's Rules of Order to Govern**

Except as otherwise herein specifically provided, Robert's Rule of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern.

