

ENTHUSIASM IS CONTAGIOUS...

CATCH IT!



**THE DUTIES OF
POST FINANCE OFFICER**

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA***

1. You have been selected as the Post's finance officer because of the reputation for integrity and honesty you possess. Please remember that everyone will depend upon your written records of financial receipts and transactions. Try to be accurate and timely in recording your data and keeping the Post's financial records up to date.

2. At the beginning of each Legion year, work with your Post Commander and executive committee to prepare a Post budget for the upcoming year. Submit the budget to the Post for approval at its first meeting of the new year. This will be your blueprint for action. Additions and deletions can be made during the year as situations arise. But having the basic blueprint will help everyone to know what is expected from them and what they can expect to have as resources for their programs.

3. You have been selected because of your dedication and interest in the American Legion. Always open all mail immediately and:

a. Process and deposit funds received on a regular, timely basis

b. Note the due dates on all bills and pay promptly or upon approval of Post Commander and/or trustees or executive committee, according to your Post's constitution and by-laws.

c. Record all transactions as they occur to avoid errors

4. Prepare monthly, quarterly and annual reports of the Post's financial condition accurately reflecting all income, the value of investments and outstanding debts or liabilities according to accepted accounting practice.

5. If your Post's income exceeds \$25,000 during the financial year reporting period, prepare and file an IRS Form 990. Better that the Post owe a few dollars than not file and be penalized heavily in subsequent years.

6. As the final step in closing your books each year, MAKE

SURE A THOROUGH AUDIT IS CONDUCTED by knowledgeable members acting as an audit committee or an outside auditor who is paid for his services.

a. This is the most important step in your record keeping process. You are protected in the event a question is raised and the assets of your Post are verifiable in the event of a catastrophe requiring proof of ownership (such as a fire destroying your Post's records).

7. If your Post hires employees, make sure you maintain the required records of time worked, salaries paid and withholdings submitted to local, state and national tax collecting authorities.

8. As finance officer, ask your Post to join an insurance program that will bond you. In that way, you will be covered by insurance if you are robbed or there is other reason to question any financial transaction you may make.

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**THE DUTIES OF
POST JUDGE ADVOCATE**

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA***

1. *You have been selected as your Post's Judge Advocate. You have an important responsibility to the Post – whether you have been selected for your legal training or past Legion experience, you are prepared by background to be the interpreter of the Constitution and By-Laws of your Post.*

2. *Your Post Commander or officers will come to you for a decision when they question the legality of the actions taken by the Post or desire a ruling on the decisions made insofar as they affect the good of the American Legion.*

3. *You are also charged with the responsibility of protecting the integrity of our organization. At times, your decision may not be popular; however, the respect of your fellow members will be sustained if you base any decision you make upon the facts of the case and have a basis for your decision in the Constitution and By-Laws of your Post or those of the National Organization or Department of Pennsylvania.*

4. *You must be diligent in seeing that the rights of each member are protected when charges are preferred against him/her by the Post. Following the Uniform Procedure for Discipline of Members as defined in the National Constitution and By-Laws, the following steps must be taken:*

a. Charges must be preferred in writing and each individual must receive a copy of those charges.

b. A hearing by an impartial committee of Post members must be held after sufficient notice is given.

c. After the hearing, the recommendations of the hearing committee must be given in writing to the Post Commander with copy to each accused individual.

d. The Post must vote to approve or disapprove the recommendations of the hearing committee.

e. The accused must be informed in writing of the decision of the Post and must be informed of their right to appeal to the Department Executive Committee within thirty (30) days

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**THE DUTIES OF
POST SERVICE OFFICER**

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
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1. You have been selected as the Post's service officer. You have one of the greatest responsibilities of any member of your post - that of helping your fellow veteran and his family. Yours is not a position that will bring great attention to you or the Post but the individuals being served will deeply appreciate your assistance if you do your job well.

2. **SERVICE OFFICER-CLIENT PRIVILEGE** - Remember, you will be given confidential information. It is your duty to always treat that information as a sacred trust between you and the veteran or family member. **DO NOT REVEAL TO OTHERS WHAT YOU ARE TOLD UNLESS YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE SPECIFIC PERMISSION OF YOUR VETERAN CLIENT OR FAMILY MEMBER. THEN, ONLY REVEAL WHAT IS NECESSARY AND ONLY TO A PROFESSIONAL IN AN AGENCY WHO CAN ASSIST YOUR CLIENT.** Otherwise, **MAINTAIN THE VETERAN'S ANONYMITY.**

3. When you are confronted with a problem by a veteran, always try to help him/her or make a contact for him/her with an agency that can provide the service needed. **IF YOU DO NOT KNOW AN ANSWER, SEEK HELP. CALL A TRAINED DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER OR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO SEEK ADVICE.**

4. Attend the Department training programs held several times each year for Post Service Officers. Become familiar with your County Director of Veterans Affairs, the Admitting Officer at the nearest VAMC, and local social service agency counselors. If you have a local attorney who will offer his services for simple legal matters, seek his help. Your job is to provide direction and assistance.

5. The questions brought to you will range from VA pensions or other benefits to temporary financial assistance for a family. You will be asked to help widows seek proper burial

of their veteran spouses and you will be invited to celebrate in the graduation of a dependent child whom you have helped with scholarship assistance. **THE CARDINAL RULE SHOULD ALWAYS BE - SEEK TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FROM AVAILABLE PROGRAMS OR SOURCES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL FIRST. IF THE SOLUTION CANNOT BE FOUND IN EXISTING PROGRAMS OR YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY, THEN CONTACT A DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER FOR ASSISTANCE.**

6. Even when the veteran or family member seems to lose faith in the process, continue to serve him/her to the best of your ability. Bureaucracy will often move slowly but determination will usually have positive results. **IF YOUR CLIENT REFUSES YOUR FURTHER ASSISTANCE, DO NOT INTERFERE. ACCEPT THE CLIENT'S DECISION GRACEFULLY.**

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**THE DUTIES OF
POST COMMANDER**

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA***

1. You have been elected as the Post's chief executive officer. Please remember that you will one day return to the ranks from which you came - use your power wisely and by your example encourage every member of the Post to give their best for the American Legion.

2. You must protect the purposes of the American Legion (as written in the Preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion) throughout your term as Post Commander. This means applying the principles in every situation and ruling in favor of the principles of The American Legion over the desires of members and local interests.

2. Working according to the Constitution and By-laws of your Post, you must make sure that all other Post officers are performing their duties to the best of their ability. Remind your officers when they have not carried out a duty of their office and seek their cooperation. Do not allow Post Officers to "forget" written reports, especially minutes and financial reports. Again, by your example, give your best and encourage your officers to do likewise.

3. As the Post Commander, you must always be ready to help the comrade veteran or widow of a veteran who comes to you in time of trouble or distress. Work with the Post Service Officer, County Director of Veterans Affairs or Department Service Officer to get help for the veteran's or widow's problem.

4. Work for harmony among the members of the Post. Enthusiasm is contagious!

If there is a problem with or between members of your Post, you must be sure that every comrade veteran is given the charges being made against him in writing and that the accused be given an impartial hearing before other members of the Post at a time and place designated at least two weeks in advance. The recommendations of the hearing committee

must then be returned to the Post membership for a vote to accept or reject these recommendations for discipline. After the vote is taken, the member being disciplined must be informed of the decision and his right of appeal to the Department Executive Committee in writing

5. You will appoint some officers and/or committee chairmen of your Post if your Post Constitution and By-Laws does not specify otherwise. When making selections, look for the best veteran for the job. Give them suggestions for programs and seek their ideas. Work together to have a special program every month while planning some fun and entertainment with it. Try to get everyone involved.

6. Stress the programs of the National Organization and the Department when planning the Post's involvement for the year. According to the size and resources of your Post, select those programs your members can best participate in and make an all-out effort. The more you can do for your fellow veterans and your community, the more satisfaction your members will feel and the more positive publicity you will generate for your Post. Remember, positive programs always attract new members.

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**THE DUTIES OF
POST SECOND VICE COMMANDER**

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA***

*You have been elected as **THIRD IN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND** for your Post. The best example you can set for all the members is to work closely with your Post Commander. Support your Commander in all his/her efforts and provide the sounding board he/she will so often need during the year.*

If you disagree with your Commander, express your thoughts in a constructive, positive manner directly to him/her. When a decision is made by the Post, however, you must abide by the policy set by the Post and become a spokesman for and supporter of that decision.

*2. Your special responsibility is **POST ACTIVITIES**. Work in conjunction with your Post Commander and your Post Activities Committee, Post Children and Youth Committee, Post Americanism Committee, and Post Veterans Affairs Committee to insure a full calendar of events that will support American Legion programs **AND** your Post Commander's goals throughout the year.*

First in importance, it is your responsibility to insure the activities for patriotic observances are planned. The Veterans' Day program and the Memorial Day program should be planned well in advance of the date and be publicized throughout your area. Working with your committees to plan a dignified, fitting tribute to our departed comrades is one of the most important duties you have. Invite all the citizens of your community to attend.

Remember, the program is not just the one held on the holiday. Work with your County Director of Veterans Affairs to have a Post committee help in decorating the graves of veterans in your local cemetery. A nice walk on a spring or fall day is wonderful exercise as well as contributing to a fitting tribute to the memories of those who have served and are now departed.

*Other Post Activities throughout the year attract veterans to become members. **ENTHUSIAM IS CONTAGIOUS!***

*3. One of your responsibilities as **Second Vice Commander** is to insure that strict tolerance is observed among all your Post's members on all political, religious, ethnic, racial and industrial matters. Stressing the values of tolerance, honesty, self-discipline, gratification by helping others without compensation and responsibility to assist less fortunate veterans and their families is part of your duties. **LEAD BY EXAMPLE!***

*You **MUST** take responsibility to insure that no veteran is hurt by the actions of other members of the Post. Know the Post's members and their families and work for **HARMONY** among them.*

4. You will be asked to assume the duties of Post Commander when neither your Commander nor First Vice Commander are available. Preside over meetings fairly and impartially.

THE CHAIN OF COMMAND IS ONLY AS STRONG AS EACH OF ITS LINKS. SUPPORT THE PROGRAMS OF THE WHOLE ORGANIZATION. WORK CLOSELY WITH AND SUPPORT YOUR POST COMMANDER IN ALL HIS EFFORTS.

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**THE DUTIES OF
POST FIRST VICE COMMANDER**

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA***

1. You have been elected as **SECOND IN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND** for your Post. The best example you can set for all the members is to work closely with your Post Commander. Support your Commander in all his/her efforts and provide the sounding board he/she will so often need during the year.

If you disagree with your Commander, express your thoughts in a constructive, positive manner directly to him/her. When a decision is made by the Post, however, you must abide by the policy set by the Post and become a spokesman for and supporter of that decision.

2. Your special responsibility is **MEMBERSHIP**. A healthy, active Post depends upon a strong membership. Whether your Post serves 35 or 1,000 members, each member is a comrade who should be welcomed at each Post event. When you meet an unaffiliated veteran, offer him/her a membership application and become his/her sponsor when the application is considered for membership at the Post meeting.

Support the efforts of your Post Membership Chairman and Post Adjutant to secure the dues of renewing members. That small personal contact, be it in person or by phone, is often the only reminder that a member needs to remember to send his/her dues to the Post.

Invite members to all Post meetings and functions. Again, the personal contact or phone call is often the spark for getting someone active in the affairs of the Post.

3. Your other special responsibility is to be a spokesman for your Post in safeguarding the honor of the Flag of our country. When you see an American flag flown improperly, it is your responsibility to try to inform the owner of the mistake he/she is making. More importantly, speak out in favor of honoring our flag with appropriate recognition by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance at all Post events and all

community events. If your Post has not already begun to support the Citizens Flag Alliance in their quest of a Constitutional amendment to protect the flag from desecration, make it your personal concern. Secure signatures on petitions in support of the amendment.

Offer to lead programs in schools to educate young Americans about the flag and their responsibility as citizens to treat it with dignity and respect.

4. When your Post Commander wants to delegate leadership of a program to you, be willing to take the reins and insure that you do your best to involve as many Post members as possible in the planning. This will be your golden opportunity to demonstrate your leadership abilities while supporting your Post and your Commander.

THE CHAIN OF COMMAND IS ONLY AS STRONG AS EACH OF ITS LINKS. SUPPORT THE PROGRAM OF THE WHOLE ORGANIZATION. WORK CLOSELY WITH AND SUPPORT YOUR POST COMMANDER IN ALL HIS EFFORTS.

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THE DUTIES OF

POST CHAPLAIN

***THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA***

1. You have been selected as your Post's Chaplain. You have an important responsibility to the Post – whether you have been selected for your religious training or past Legion experience, you are prepared by background to be the spiritual adviser of your Post. In a non-sectarian manner, you should be prepared to listen to your fellow veteran and provide aid and spiritual comfort in times of stress or bereavement. Work with your Service Officer to aid members and their families in time of need.

2. Your Post Commander or officers will come to you in confidence. Remember the privileged communication you are having is for your ears only. Uphold the high ideals of our organization in any advice you offer.

3. You should be prepared to offer the invocation and benediction at each meeting of the Post. You will also be called upon to offer appropriate blessings at the initiation of new members; the dedication of a building, monument or colors; or at the memorial services for a comrade. All such services are commemorated by use of the American Legion ritual. Remember, our motto honors "GOD AND COUNTRY".

4. Use the persuasion of your office to promote harmony and unity in the Post.