



# Department of Ohio American Legion

## Commander/Director/President

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Holly Lewis

## Learning Objectives

Students will understand the roles and responsibilities of a Commander in The American Legion

This also applies to Presidents of the Auxiliary, Commander of the SAL, and Directors of the Legion Riders

## **You've been elected to lead, now what?**

- Locate and read the Post Constitution and Bylaws
  - Read the minutes of post meetings for the previous year
    - Any actions still pending?
    - What has happened?
  - Review finance reports for the previous year
  - Communicate with County and District Commanders, introduce yourself
  - Familiarize yourself with Robert's Rules of Order
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## Commander's Role

- Leadership
  - Running the meetings
  - Ensure a culture of respect, inclusiveness and equity
  - Knows all requirements for the Post/Squadron/Chapter/Unit and ensures that they are being met
  - Knowledge
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# The Role of Leadership

- Be the example
  - Delegate yet hold officers accountable
  - Take charge when there are issues
  - Be the face of the organization to the community
  - Recognize member's strengths and encourage them to be used accordingly
  - Listen, listen, listen
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# The Role of Running Meetings

- Act as the meeting facilitator
  - Prepare an agenda
  - Ensure that the meeting is run in proper order and that all ceremonial elements are performed; bring back to agenda
  - Ensure that all decisions are properly voted upon and that they are documented appropriately
  - Ensure that all members have a voice
  - Ensure that unruly behavior is not tolerated
  - Tie breaker
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# The Ceremony

Why is the ceremonial part of the meeting important?

- **Bonds members together** for a common purpose; Veterans Affairs, National Defense, Americanism, Children and Youth
  - **Lays the groundwork** for respectful behavior at the meeting
  - **Reiterates the purpose** of the American Legion
  - **Provides standardization across the organization** ensuring we conduct meetings properly, honor veterans responsibly, and maintain our roots from our life in the Armed Services
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# The Role of Culture

- Embrace diversity and be the example for others
    - Different skin color
    - Different ways of thinking
    - Different religions
  - Ensure inclusiveness
    - Everyone has a voice
    - Make it comfortable for them to participate
  - Ensure equity
    - Everyone should be treated the same
    - No tolerance policy for anything else
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# The Role of Oversight

- Financial
  - Membership
  - Department/District
  - Licenses
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# Commander's Role in the Financials

- Varies depending on Post assets, finance officer experience, size of the Post and its programs, past history of the Post
  - Commander's main role is to ensure the integrity of Post financial management
  - Visibility to the membership is vital; Members deserve to know how Post money is managed and spent
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# Commander's Role in Membership

- Be positive in all recruiting and retention activities
  - Be a proud Legionnaire – show it – set the example
  - Think of membership as a continuing program – not an annual program
  - Ensure that the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice has what they need to succeed
  - Dare to be different – try new things
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## Commander's Role in Department/District

- Ensure that required forms are filled out accurately and on time
  - Attend District and Department functions to learn about new things that affect the Post and Programs
  - Enlist the help of District Officers when unsure of what to do
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## Commander's Role in Licensing

- Ensure that all required licenses are submitted accurately and on time
  - Ensure that all regulations and laws are being complied with
  - Ensure that regulations and laws are reviewed periodically for changes
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# The Role of Knowledge

- Legion.org
  - Officer's Guide & Manual of Ceremonies
  - Post Adjutant's Guide
  - Public Relations Toolkit
  - District and County Commanders Guide
  - Four Pillars booklet
  - Robert's Rules of Order
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# Questions



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