

**AMVETS DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**



2017-2018

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ARTICLE I: DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Departments shall be organized with a headquarters located as authorized by the department convention or an intervening 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.

AMVETS Uniform Department Constitution, 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)¹

Departments shall formulate By Laws 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 for 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 15 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.

National executive committeemen and alternates shall assume office in accordance with Article VII, Section 4 of the National Constitution.²

- (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 the 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

¹AMVETS NATIONAL CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE IX DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION, Section 10:

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

² 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 departments 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.”

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- individual's accounts with department headquarters are fully paid up.
- (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 post from which the individual is registering.
 - (i) Departments shall specify convention quorum requirements in by laws 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 with 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 appointed department officers shall be members of the Department

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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 EXPULSION 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 as 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 by laws 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 qualifications 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 responsibilities 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

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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 within the budget, expenses shall be budgeted as realistically as possible to ensure overall spending integrity;
- (d) A contingency budget line 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

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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.

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

- (f) 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.

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 resolutions 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 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.

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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 findings 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 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.

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STANDING RULES

New post shall be accepted into the Department upon submission of the appropriate paperwork and fees. (Amended 9/9/2000).

1. The department will pay for one room for a maximum of two nights for delegates attending the department convention of new posts which exist since the last department convention, and the department shall pay the delegate fees to the department convention for the post commanders.
(Amended 5-30-2009).
2. The department shall send a copy of the DEC minutes to all posts failing to attend DEC meetings. (Adopted 3/14/1998)
3. 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)
4. The MEMBERSHIP RECRUITING PROGRAM is open to all department members except paid department employees. The department will award \$150.00 plus a plaque to the department member who sponsors the most new members over fifteen (15). The member who sponsors the most new members exceeding thirty-five (35) will be awarded and AMVETS Master Recruiter jacket with the member's name and post number on it. The contest is to run annually on a calendar year basis. The deadline for submission for names is the annual DEC meeting in March. Awards to be presented annually at the department convention. (Adopted 3/14/1998)
5. Department members participating in the department ROTC program shall be reimbursed for hotel room, upon presentation of a receipt. (Amended 3/14/1998)
6. 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 nominations must be received by the department Executive Director by May 1st the Department Commander may select the winning nominee from the letters received, or at his 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)
7. The department shall give 200 department lapel pins to the Department Auxiliary and 200 department lapel 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)
8. Added on (September 13, 2008) Proceeds from Department fund raising programs operated jointly with the Auxiliary should be divided equally between the Department and the Auxiliary. Amended July 1, 2012.
9. The Department Commander, with consent of a Post's Commander, to assign department elected or appointed officers who have specific administrative expertise, online access to assist or manage Post completion, filing and payment for completion of annual IRS Form 990N, WA. State Annual non-profit reports and reinstatements of IRS tax exempt status and or WA. State non-profit corporation status.

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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

A department convention shall be held annually in Washington State between May 15 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.

- (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 ten (10) 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 provision so these bylaws.

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 membership shall be certified by the department Executive Director and Finance Officer as of thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the department convention.

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

- (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 once and may not hold an elected office in a AMVETS post or any other chartered veterans organization may be held.
- (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 in

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the odd numbered years.

(d) No salaried employee of AMVETS Department of Washington shall be eligible for election to any Department Office of AMVETS.

- (a) The Department Commander, with the consent and approval of the DEC shall appoint a Service Director, Executive Director, Historian, and Chaplain and may appoint District Commanders as required.
- (b) The Executive Director, Chaplain, Service Director, 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.

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.
- (d) Suspension or removal of the Service Director for cause shall be by a two-thirds vote of a of the DEC and comply with Article III: Election and Appointment of Officers, Section 6 in the Department Constitution and further the UNIFORM CODE OF PROCEDURE FOR THE SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF A MEMBER (AMVETS National Bylaws, Appendix B).

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 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.

No Department Commander shall be elected from the same post for more than two successive terms.

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 Department Commander must have served a full one-year term as Post Commander or District Commander.

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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- (a) An elected officer shall be informed by certified mail of charges preferred against them. And must be given a copy of the 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 require 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

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
- (h) Be the Chief Executive Officer of the department, enjoying the rights and privileges, while 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 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 in to the financial institution.
- (m) Assure the Department has provided a surety bond for the Finance Officer and account signatories.
- (n) Assure that Internal Revenue Service (IRS) form 990 is prepared and filed with the IRS.

The 1st Vice Commander will:

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- (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.

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.

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 the 2nd Vice Commander.

The Judge Advocate shall:

- (a) See that the 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 constitutions 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 his approval and acceptance.
- (f) Assure that subordinate organizations receive a copy of their accepted Constitution and Bylaws, with notation of his 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 the 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.

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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.

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, e-mail or facsimile to the Department Executive Director.

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.

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) The Department Finance Officer shall be chairman of the Audit Committee and conduct audits for all Department, Department Convention, Department Service Office and Service Foundation financial accounts annually. The audit shall be completed and presented to the Commander prior to the annual Convention.
- (d) Prepare an annual budget for submittal to the Finance Committee for consideration at the annual Convention, however; such budget shall not include the annual Service Department budget which shall be submitted to the Personnel Committee for consideration at the 3rd DEC meeting of the calendar year as a separate and distinct

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document.

- (e) Receive and disburse all funds from the department financial accounts, except those funds maintained by the office of the Service Director, the Service Foundation, and the Convention Association.

ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF APPOINTED OFFICERS

The Department Executive Director shall:

- (a) The Department Executive Director shall 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 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) The Department Executive Director shall serve as the secretary of the Department.
- (d) The Department Executive Director shall serve at the pleasure of the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee

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.

The Service Director shall coordinate with the Personnel Committee to organize a Service Department for the purpose of assisting veterans, their dependents and survivors to obtain benefits derived from military service.

The Chaplain shall:

- (a) Perform such divine and non-sectarian services as may be necessary, adhering to the appropriate ceremonial rituals contained in the AMVETS Chaplains Manual.
- (b) Discharge such other duties and services incident to the office.

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.

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- (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 First and Second Vice Commanders in the commission of their jobs.

ARTICLE VI: DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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.

The following members in good standing shall be considered members of the Department Executive Committee each 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

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

- (a) 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).
- (b) All meetings of the DEC shall be open, with the exception of disciplinary meetings.
- (c) Only DEC members shall have a vote. Voice by other members shall be governed by the Chair.

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- (d) The Commander may call special meetings.
 - 1. Notice of special meetings shall be by written notice, mailed to the address of record of all elected and appointed department officers, post commanders, and the Presidents of the Service Foundation and the convention Association.
 - 2. Notice must give the time, date, location and subject of the meeting.
- (e) Both immediate past and newly elected DEC members shall attend the 1st post-convention DEC meeting.

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

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

ARTICLE VII: FINANCES

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 account of the office of the Service Director, the Service Foundation, and the Convention Association shall be deposited into these accounts.

Funds received for Life Membership shall be deposited into the checking account. Of these funds, thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents (\$37.50) shall be withdrawn for each new Life Membership, and deposited into a brokerage account opened by the department, which is operated by a firm who is a member of the Securities Investment Protection Corporation (SIPC).

- (a) All funds expended by the Department of Washington except those expended from the accounts of the office of the Service Director, the Service Foundation, and 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 card 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.

Budgeted funds may be used to reimburse the Department Commander, Executive Director, N.E.C. and Alternate N.E.C. for either monthly expenses, National

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Convention expenses, or N.E.C. 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.

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.

- (a) Refer to Appendix C “Reimbursement of Travel, Lodging and Per Diem Expenses” for additional guidance.

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 of the debt until approved by the Commander.

The DEC shall, insofar as practical, adhere to the budget adopted or amended by the Finance Committee.

The department financial accounts shall be audited annually by May 1st and upon change of or resignation of the Finance Officer, by an audit committee appointed by the commander. The Committee will be chaired by the Finance Officer and include the Department Executive Director, Chair of the Finance Committee and two DEC members appointed by the Commander, independent of any department financial/treasury function, whose shall be responsible for the review of financial records during the audit.

The Department Commander may request, at his discretion, an audit of the department finances.

The audit committee shall audit the Department, Service Office, Convention Association and Service Foundation financial accounts and report the results to the Department Commander prior to the department convention.

Unbudgeted expenditures or transfer of funds from the financial accounts shall be referred to the Finance Committee for approval.

ARTICLE VIII: DEPARTMENT FINANCE COMMITTEE

- (a) There shall be a Finance Committee composed of the Finance Committee Chair appointed by the Commander, Commander, Finance Officer, Immediate Past Department Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, Judge Advocate, and the Service Foundation Finance Officer.

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- (b) 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.
- (a) The Finance Committee shall meet prior to each DEC meeting, department convention or at other times as determined by the Finance Committee Chairman.
- (b) The Finance Committee shall 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) The Finance Committee shall submit the provisional annual budget to the Department Convention.
- (d) The Finance Committee shall adopt the fiscal year, September 1 through August 31, to match that of the National Headquarters membership year.

ARTICLE IX: DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

There shall be a Department Personnel Committee composed of the commander, Immediate Past Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, 3rd Vice Commander, and Judge Advocate.

The Personnel Committee will review and approve annual budget of the Department Service Office. The committee shall meet annually immediately after the 3rd (Fall) D.E.C. meeting.

The Personnel Committee shall meet as required to consider purchase of equipment for the department and the department Service Office in excess of \$500.00.

- (a) They will consider and approve Christmas bonuses and increases or decrease for the monthly salaries of the Department Service Director, the Department Service Officer(s) and all other Service Office personnel, whose salaries shall be paid from the Department Service Office account and be subject to normal withholding of taxes.
- (b) They shall also review and approve salaries of the Department Service Office personnel, as submitted by the Service Director.

ARTICLE X: CHARTERS AND DISCIPLINE

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

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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, of AMVETS National Bylaws will be followed.

ARTICLE XI: MEMBERSHIP

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.

Concurrent membership in more than one post shall not be allowed.

- (a) Department dues shall Be approved by the delegates assembled at convention.
- (b) 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
- (c) Dues above the minimum set forth in the AMVETS National CBL shall be fixed by the post and/or department.
Appendix B: to these bylaws establishes current amounts for Department and National membership dues, payment methods and procedures.

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.

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 B of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII: CONVENTION ASSOCIATION

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) Adopt its own constitution and bylaws
- (c) Conduct financial business of the Department of Washington Convention.

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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.

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

The Convention Association shall submit a copy of their Constitution and bylaws, if revised or amended to the department Judge Advocate.

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. 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 possess a membership card or other satisfactory evidence identifying the delegate or alternate as a member of the post from which the individual is registering.

ARTICLE XIII: SERVICE DEPARTMENT

AMVETS Department of Washington shall establish a Service Department in accordance with the laws of the State of Washington and the rules and regulations of the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Service Director, AMVETS Department of Washington shall

- (a) Work directly with the permanent Personnel Committee established by Article IX of these bylaws.
- (b) Work with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) contract manager as needed to assure compliance with contract stipulations
- (c) Provide to the DEC through the Department Commander any WDVA contract performance measurement and monitoring reports received from or submitted to the WDVA.

The Service Director shall establish a service department checking account and other accounts in a financial institution whose funds are insured by the FDIC/FSLIC. All service department funds shall be deposited into these accounts and dispersed by checks signed by the Service Director and countersigned by members, authorized in writing by the Department Commander. These accounts will be audited annually in March by the Audit Committee and upon change of or resignation of the department Service Director, by the Audit Committee.

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The Service Director shall prepare and submit a Service Department budget to the Personnel Committee for consideration at the November DEC meeting. The budget shall include actual income and expenses from the preceding year, plus proposed income and expenses for the upcoming year. The budget shall provide the following data as separate items:

- (a) Income from:
 - 1. The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs
 - 2. AMVETS National Service Foundation
 - 3. Other AMVET sources
 - 4. Grants
 - 5. Donations
 - 6. Miscellaneous sources (identify source)
- (b) Other resources (Personnel hours reported @ minimum wage)
 - 1. USDVA work study students
 - 2. Other federal and state supplement work programs
 - 3. Volunteers
- (c) Expenditures (Separately and collectively) for
- (d) Individual salaries
- (e) Taxes
- (f) Operation expenses. (Rent, equipment, utilities, postage, telephone, etc).

The Service Director shall:

- (a) Assure compliance with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs contract.
- (b) Hire the personnel, within the constraints of the budget, necessary to carry out the mission of the Service Department.
- (c) Prepare job descriptions of the functions of Service Department personnel.
- (d) Provide adequate training material and training to assure that personnel are proficient in their assigned duties.
- (e) Supervise the Service Department programs.
- (f) Coordinate with the US Department of Veteran Affairs to assure that veterans and other client receive due process when submitting claims for federal veteran's benefits.
- (g) Coordinate with the (WDVA) to assure that veterans receive state benefits earned by federal military service.
- (h) Assist with the workload in the department Service Office.
- (i) He shall make an annual written financial report of the department Service Office accounts at the department convention.
- (j) He shall prepare, maintain and update as required, an employee manual. Each employee shall be provided a copy of the current manual, and updates as they occur.

No equipment in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) may be purchased without prior approval of the Personnel Committee.

The Service Director and all Service Officers or Service Representatives shall be accredited by

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the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) General Council.

Non-accredited personnel shall not counsel or advise veterans regarding USDVA benefits.

He shall, following the end of the fiscal year (December 31) annually, contact a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and then transmit all appropriate Service Department financial records for the prior year to the CPA for the purpose of initiating the IRS Form 990. Upon completion by the CPA, he shall have the form signed by the Department Commander, and then transmit it by certified mail to the IRS prior to May 15th. He shall also maintain a copy of the completed form (s) on file with the Service Office for the retaining period required by the IRS.

ARTICLE XIV: DISTRICTS

The term of office for appointed District Commanders shall be one (1) year, from department convention to the next department convention.

They may be reappointed for a successive term, upon approval of the DEC at a regularly scheduled DEC meeting.

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 XV: POSTS

- (a) Posts shall be governed locally by their own officers, according to their own Constitution and Bylaws.
- (b) Election of officers shall be held annually between May 1st and June 30th.
- (c) Officers shall be installed no later than July 1st.
- (d) Posts shall be subject and subordinate to the jurisdiction of the National and Department Headquarters.
- (e) Provisions of post Constitutions 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.

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Posts shall revalidate their charter annually prior to July 1st by completing the form prescribed by AMVETS National Headquarters, and submit a copy to Department Headquarters. Department Headquarters shall submit a copy of each form received from posts to AMVETS National Headquarters prior to July 15th.

Any post failing to supply certification of officers to department headquarters on the forms provided for this purpose before July 1st, 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.

The post Judge Advocate shall transmit a copy of the Post Constitution and Bylaws, if revised or amended, to the department Judge Advocate.

Each post will, if possible, have an officers training course made available to its elected and appointed officers. All officers should complete the course.

Posts shall register with the State of Washington as non-profit organizations and shall renew their non-profit status annually.

Each post shall certify to department annually by March 31st, 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 XVI: LADIES AUXILIARY

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

ARTICLE XVII: SERVICE FOUNDATION

The Service Foundation shall adopt a Constitution and Bylaws and register with the state of Washington as a non-profit corporation as the: AMVETS DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON SERVICE FOUNDATION, and shall renew their non-profit status annually.

The Service Foundation shall transmit a copy of their Constitution and Bylaws, if revised or amended, to the department Judge Advocate.

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No post shall create a Service Foundation.

The financial accounts shall be audited annually in March and upon change or resignation of the Finance Officer, by the Audit committee.

ARTICLE XVIII: JUNIOR AMVETS

Membership in Junior AMVETS shall be limited to persons qualified under National Bylaws.

Local posts are authorized and encouraged to establish a Junior AMVETS organization within their posts.

They shall transmit a copy of their annual charter revalidation to the Department Executive Director within thirty (30) days of receipt from National Headquarters.

ARTICLE XIX: SONS OF AMVETS

Membership in the Sons of AMVETS shall be limited to persons qualified under National Bylaws.

Local posts are encouraged to establish a Sons of AMVETS organization within their posts.

They shall transmit a copy of their annual charter revalidation to the Department Adjutant within thirty (30) days of receipt from National Headquarters.

ARTICLE XX: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Procedures, not otherwise provided herein, shall be conducted pursuant to the current copy of: "ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER, NEWLY REVISED"

ARTICLE XXI: 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 to 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 effected, without previous notification, by a unanimous vote of delegates present and voting. Approved amendments become effective the day following adjournment of the

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Department Convention.

De minimums corrections to spelling, grammar, titles, references, 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 effected outside of convention or DEC and without a vote of delegates.

ARTICLE XXII: 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 of 2016. The adopted amendments have been included within this revision. --

Steve Bird, Department Commander

Glenn Skinner, Executive Director

Duane Eldon Herman, Judge Advocate

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APPENDIX A

AMVETS, Department of Washington Post Certification of Annual Post Financial Audit

INSTRUCTIONS: This form is required to be completed by the Post following each annual financial audit as required per Section 7 of Article XV of the AMVETS, Department of Washington Bylaws.

Upon completion of your post's annual financial audit, complete this form, including the post Commanders signature, make a copy for your post files, and then mail the original to AMVETS, Department of Washington Headquarters.

I, the undersigned certify to AMVETS, Department of Washington that financial audit(s) of Post # _____ financial accounts has been performed for the year of:
_____ on _____
(Enter year) (Enter date performed)

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APPENDIX B

Minimum Membership Dues

New annual membership	Minimum	\$30.00 (\$15 to National - \$15 to Dept.)
New Member at Large (MAL) Dept.)	Minimum	\$30.00 (\$15 to National - \$15 to Dept.)
Annual renewal for member & MAL: Dept.)	Minimum	\$30,00 (\$15 to National - \$15 to Dept.)
New Life Membership to Dept.)	Minimum	\$187.50 (\$125 to National – \$62.50 to Dept.)

Minimum dues for conversion from Annual to Life Membership:

Annual members who paid their annual dues between September 1 and August 31 may convert to life membership and receive credit for their prepaid annual dues at any time during that period.

Annual dues not paid Minimum \$187.50 (\$125 to National – \$62.50 to Dept.)

Annual dues paid: Minimum \$157.50 (\$110 to National – \$47.50 to Dept.)

Payment Methods and Procedures

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

Payment Procedures

- (a) Check(s) for dues shall identify the *purpose* on the check or in separate note, i.e., the number and type of memberships for how the payment is to be applied.
- (b) 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.

National website link to Form:

http://www.amvets.org/pdfs/membership_pdfs/membership_life_transmittal_form_fill_in.pdf

- (c) 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. 98409-2632

- (d) Members and 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.

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Post Leaders with Access

Post Commanders

Post 1st Vice

Post Adjutant

The Commander may request from National “Special Access” for Department/Post leaders if required.

Department Leader with Access

Department Commander

Department 1st Vice

Department Adjutant

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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, Service Foundation, 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.**