UNIT CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Department of Illinois

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF _____

(Unit Name and Number)

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS LOCATED AT:

_____

DATE: _____

PREAMBLE

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during all wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and goodwill on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

CONSTITUTION
ARTICLE I
NAME

The Name of this organization shall be the American Legion Auxiliary, _____

Unit No._____Department of Illinois located at_____.

ARTICLE II

OBJECT

Section 1. The object of the American Legion Auxiliary,_____

_____

Unit No._____Department of Illinois shall be as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution.

ARTICLE III

ELIGIBILITY

Section 1. Eligibility for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary is determined by The American Legion. The eligibility requirements from The American Legion governing documents shall be provided as a footnote to this Constitution for information purposes and shall be updated as appropriate.1

Section 2. There shall be two (2) classes of membership, Senior and Junior. (a) Senior membership shall be composed of members aged eighteen (18) and older; provided, however, a member eligible under Section 1 of this article and who is under the age of eighteen (18) years and married shall be classified as a Senior member. (b) Junior membership shall be composed of members under the age of eighteen (18) years, whose activities shall be supervised by the Senior membership. Upon reaching the age of eighteen years, Junior members shall automatically be admitted into Senior membership with full privileges. (c) Dues of both classes shall be paid annually or for life.

Section 3. A member whose dues are paid up-to-date and who is not subject to suspension or expulsion shall be considered in good standing and the member shall be entitled to full membership rights, privileges, and benefits in the Unit.

Section 4. Each unit of the ALA, except department headquarters units, has the authority to decide its membership and shall be responsible for verifying eligibility of prospective members, transfer or new.

Section 5. No person who is a member of an organization which has for its aim the overthrow of the United States Government or who subscribes to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government shall be eligible to become or remain a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Section 6. Membership can only be offered upon an affirmative vote of the unit members. Unless an alternate procedure is set forth in the unit bylaws (i.e. your membership chair or committee approves applications etc.)

Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the: (1) grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of consanguinity of members of The American Legion; and

(2) grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of consanguinity of all servicemembers who served in American Legion Auxiliary National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules Fall 2026 7 either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918 and any time after December 7, 1941 who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the armed forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during either eligibility periods and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge;

(3) grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of consanguinity of all servicemembers who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during either of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941, who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during either eligibility period and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and

(4) to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.

ARTICLE IV
UNIT OFFICERS

Section I. The Unit shall elect their officers annually. The officers are President, First Vice President and/or Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Historian and Sergeant-at-Arms. Each shall serve until their successor is duly installed or as otherwise provided. All officers may be elected, or the Secretary and/or Chaplain may be appointed.

ARTICLE V
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. **Named** – The Executive Committee shall consist of the Unit Officers and Chairmen of Standing Committees. Past Unit Presidents who are not current officers or chairmen may attend and have voice but no vote.

ARTICLE VI
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular Unit meeting, provided the proposed amendments shall have been read at the previous meeting or have been printed in the call for the meeting.

Section 2. This Constitution shall be automatically amended to conform to the National and Department Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1
NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

___Section 1. **Nominations** – There shall be a Nominating Committee of five (5) members, one (1) appointed by the President, two (2) elected by the Executive Committee, and two (2) elected from the floor. The member appointed by the President shall call the meeting of the Committee and will serve as Chairman. This Committee shall submit one (1) candidate for each office, at which time nominations from the floor shall be in order.

OR

_____Alternate Section 1. Nominations for Unit officers shall be from the floor.

Section 2. **Consent** - no one may be nominated whose consent to serve has not been obtained.

Section 3. Time of Nominations and Elections of officers shall be held in:

_____ (1) April and May; OR _____ (2) May and June

Section 4. Election –

(a) When there is more than one candidate for an office, voting shall be by ballot. A majority vote shall elect.

(b) Any member over eighteen (18) years of age in good standing in their Unit shall be entitled to vote and hold office. Married members under the age of 18 have the same privileges.

Section 5. All officers shall be elected annually at a meeting duly called for that purpose. The Secretary and Chaplain may be either elected or appointed.

Section 6. **District Delegates and Alternates** – The Unit President and five delegates and alternates shall be elected to attend District meetings.

ARTICLE II
OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

Section 1. The elected officers are:

____President	_____Treasurer
____First Vice President	_____Chaplain
____Second Vice President	_____Historian
____Secretary	_____Sgt.-at-Arms

Section 2. The appointed officers are:

_____ Secretary	_____ Chaplain

Section 3. Installation of Officers shall take place immediately following the Department Convention. A joint installation is recommended when possible. The installing officer shall be selected by the incoming President and shall be a Past President of any Unit.

Section 4. Vacancies occurring in any elective office may be filled by election at any regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose, provided notice of such election has been given in the regular call for the meeting, or in special notice sent five (5) days prior to the meeting. Vacancies occurring in any appointive office may be filled by the President at any stated meeting of the Unit.

Section 5. **Duties of Officers** -

(a) Duties of the Unit President: It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee; to enforce strict observance of the Constitution and Bylaws; to appoint all officers not otherwise provided for; to appoint all committees (the member first named to serve as chairman); to approve by their signature all orders drawn on the treasury, which have been approved by the action of the Unit in a business meeting; or upon order of the Executive Committee, as provided for in Article III, Section 1 of the Unit Bylaws; to be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; and to perform such other duties as custom and parliamentary usage require.

(b) Duties of the Unit Vice Presidents: It shall be the duty of the Vice President(s) to assist the President in the administrative affairs of the Unit; to preside (in the order named) at the meetings of the Unit in the absence of the President; to succeed her/him in office in case of death, resignation or removal from office; and to perform such other duties pertaining to their offices.

(c) Duties of the Unit Secretary: It shall be the duty of the Secretary to record the proceedings and transactions of all meetings of the Unit; to act as custodian of all books, papers and records; to keep a record of names and addresses of the members, showing the source of their eligibility; to send out such notices as are directed by the President; to process the correspondence of the Unit; to keep on file in a comprehensive manner copies of all correspondence sent and received; and perform other duties as shall be required of her/him by the President.
(1.) Where deemed necessary, a Recording Secretary and a Corresponding Secretary may be elected/appointed to carry on the duties normally performed by the Secretary.

(d) Duties of the Unit Treasurer: It shall be the duty of the Unit Treasurer to receive all money belonging to the Unit; disburse the same on regularly drawn orders; keep a true and accurate account of all monies received and disbursed; and report at each business meeting of the Unit the receipts and disbursements for the period intervening since the last regular meeting, showing in each report the cash balance on hand. The treasurer shall maintain at least two separate funds, namely a General and a Poppy Fund. All poppy donations shall be placed in the Poppy Fund and be used to assist the veteran and his/her children. The treasurer shall receive all dues; keep a strict account of each member and remit per capita dues as required by Department; and perform such other duties as may be required of her/him by the President. The treasurer's accounts shall be audited annually. The Treasurer shall pay all current bills before transferring all funds, books and papers belonging to the Unit to their successor.

(e) Duties of the Unit Chaplain: It shall be the duty of the Chaplain to conduct the devotional services of all ceremonies and meetings and perform other duties pertaining to their office.

(f) Duties of the Unit Historian: It shall be the duty of the Unit Historian to compile historical records of the Unit and make a report to Department. The historian shall prepare a written account of the year's activities and achievements which shall be retained in a permanent file by the Unit.

(g) Duties of the Unit Sergeant-at Arms: It shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to preserve order at the meetings of the Unit, to be in charge of the property of the Unit, to receive and introduce visitors, and to perform such other duties as requested by the President.

ARTICLE III
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Duties - The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the Unit and transact the routine business of the Unit, having power to spend money from the various funds of the Unit not to exceed $ _____. It shall bring recommendations to the Unit for consideration.

Section 2. Regular meetings shall be held _____.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by order of the President or on written request of at least three members of the Executive Committee. Uniform notice of such special meeting shall be given to all members of the Executive Committee; and, except in extreme emergency, shall be given at least forty-eight hours in advance. At special meetings only business specified shall be transacted.

Section 4. Quorum shall be_____members of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV
COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committees Named – The following Standing Committees shall be appointed: Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children and Youth, Community Service, Constitution and Bylaws, Education, Finance, American Legion Auxiliary Girls State, Gold Star, Junior Activities, Leadership, Legislative, Membership, Music, National Security, Past Presidents Parley, Poppy, Public Relations, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation.

Social, Visiting, Ways and Means or other committees may be added. Units may combine under one chairmanship correlated programs if desired.

Section 2. **Duties of Standing Committees** –

(a) The Americanism Committee shall cooperate with other patriotic organizations and civic societies within the community in order to promote Americanism, patriotism, and loyalty to the home and government.

(b) The Auxiliary Emergency Fund Committee shall be responsible for encouraging support of the National Fund which is available for grants to American Legion Auxiliary members who qualify for assistance in time of emergency until other financial assistance can be secured.

(c) The Children and Youth Committee shall always keep in touch with dependents of ex-servicemen and women, who are in need. The Committee is authorized to give temporary relief in cases of emergency, following investigation to determine need.

(d) The Community Service Committee shall promote activities for the good of the Unit and the community and shall promote the Community Service program of the Department.

(e) The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall keep the Unit informed on suggested revisions made in accordance with the rules controlling same as printed in the Bylaws of the Department, District and Unit.

(f) The Education Committee shall ascertain and furnish the Unit, and the children of veterans within the community, information relating to the special benefits available to them.

(g) The Finance Committee shall budget funds of the Unit for the year, audit the books annually, and approve all bills before payment.

(h) The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Committee shall, if funds permit, seek out candidates for American Legion Auxiliary Girls State from local high schools, and finance the cost of the seminar for the most deserving of the candidates.

(i) The Gold Star Committee shall honor the Gold Star members.

(j) The Junior Activities Committee shall encourage enrollment of junior members, provide a program suitable for their participation, and cooperate with the Department program.

(k) The Leadership Committee shall encourage participation of the members in Leadership classes.

(l) The Legislative Committee shall bring to the Unit the Legislative program of The American Legion and encourage individual contact on vital issues as set forth by The American Legion.

(m) The Membership Committee shall seek out eligible members and encourage them to become active members of the Unit. Applications for membership shall be referred to the Membership Committee who shall present them immediately to the Unit upon obtaining the signature of a Post Officer. Membership cards shall be issued upon acceptance of Unit dues and establishment of eligibility.

(n) The Music Committee shall encourage the use of patriotic music at Unit functions.

(o) The National Security Committee shall participate in the program as outlined by Department.

(p) The Past Presidents Parley Committee shall cooperate in the activities of the Department and Unit Past Presidents in furthering their active service for the American Legion Auxiliary; particular attention shall be devoted to the care of hospitalized women veterans and the program of Nurses Scholarships.

(q) The Poppy Committee shall in all ways possible perpetuate the memory of veterans, both living and dead, who served in the Armed Services of their country during wartime. They shall encourage Unit members to distribute poppies on Poppy Day as established by the Department, and make use of the poppy in memorial decorations, etc.

(r) The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for all news media coverage sponsored by the Unit and further the Department Public Relations program. They shall inform the public of the aims and purposes of the American Legion Auxiliary.

(s) The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee shall conduct this program as outlined by the District and Department with consideration given to the fact that it was the initial program established by The American Legion.

Section 3. **Committee Reports** – Chairmen of all Standing Committees shall make regular reports to the Unit.

Section 4. **Debt Obligation** – No committee shall be discharged until all debts contracted by it are settled and paid.

Section 5. An auditing committee shall be appointed by the Unit President for the purpose of auditing the Treasurer's accounts at the close of each year and making a report of the audit to the Unit.

ARTICLE V

DUES AND FINANCE

Section 1 The annual membership dues of this Unit shall be as set forth in the Unit Standing Rules and shall require notification of all Units members and a 2/3 vote to change.

Section 2. A member failing to pay annual dues, including the Unit, Department and National assessments, by January 31, shall be classed as delinquent and shall be suspended from all membership privileges. Payment of back dues, after suspension, shall reinstate such member to active membership. Any member delinquent to December 31 of the year of the delinquency shall automatically be dropped from the rolls and may not thereafter be reinstated without vote of the Unit, where the Constitution of the Unit requires a vote on application for membership and may be reinstated only by paying all back dues or by re-establishing eligibility and making application as a new member.

Section 3. All Unit members who handle funds shall be bonded for a fee of $5.50 per year. Bonding fees shall be paid in three-year increments. Units shall remit $16.50 every three years beginning with the 2009-2010 year, to the District Treasurer for forwarding to the Department Treasurer.

ARTICLE VI
UNIT MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

Section 1. Regular Meetings of the Unit shall be held (specify definite meeting days) _____,

or as otherwise determined in case of emergency, by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. An Annual Meeting of this Unit shall be held in the month of _____ each year for the purpose of electing officers and receiving annual reports.

Section 3. Special Meetings of the Unit may be called by the President, or upon written request of_____members, provided written notice of such meeting has been sent to each member five (5) days in advance, stating the purpose of the meeting, and no other business transacted.

Section 4. Quorum shall be_____members at any Unit meeting.

Section 5. Invitation to District President shall be extended by the Unit to attend at least one meeting a year, at the expense of the Unit, if funds are available.
Section 6. Convention Representation –

(a) Each Unit shall be entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate, and for every fifty (50) members, or major fraction thereof, one (1) other delegate and one (1) other alternate shall be allowed, provided the current dues have been received by the Department Treasurer thirty (30) days prior to the date of the Department Convention. Units organized within this thirty (30) day period shall be entitled to representation in the Convention.

(b) Each Unit shall elect a delegate(s) and alternate delegate(s) to the Department Convention. The President and incoming President shall have preference as nominees.

(c) The expense to the Department Convention of the delegate(s) shall be paid by the Unit, provided sufficient funds are available.

ARTICLE VII

TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS

Section 1. Transfer of Membership: A member who is not subject to suspension or membership revocation under due process is eligible to transfer their membership to another unit if the member has paid membership dues to the current unit for either the current year or immediate past membership year. A member transferring to a new unit must pay current year dues to either the current unit or to the Unit into which the member wishes to transfer. Evidence of paid membership includes: American Legion Auxiliary Membership Card, verification of membership by ALA Department or National Headquarters membership records, other documentation verifying payment of current or immediate past year membership dues such as a cancelled check or receipt, or when verifying documentation is not available, a sworn statement that the member's membership dues payment was tendered.

Section 2. Withdrawal – A Unit member may withdraw providing their current dues are fully paid. Upon withdrawal, however, she/he shall be prohibited from joining any other Unit as a new member during the remainder of the current year for which dues are paid. In the event a member wishes to move their membership from one Unit to another during the current year, it shall be done by transfer and not by withdrawal.

ARTICLE VIII
DISCIPLINE

Section 1. For any violation of the Unit, Department or National Constitutions, or for conduct improper and prejudicial to the welfare of the Auxiliary or of The American Legion, any member may be expelled from membership or any officer removed from office by two-thirds of the vote cast at a Unit meeting duly called for that purpose, said expulsion or removal to be binding only in the event said member or officer shall have been given at least fifteen (15) days' notice in writing by the Unit Secretary of the charges and the hearing thereon. Either party may have the right to appeal to the Department Executive Committee, and their action thereon shall be final. The expense of said appeal shall be borne by the appellant.

Section 2. No Unit or member within the Department shall send official communications on this appeal to any other Unit or member without the prior consent of the Department Executive Committee.

Section 3. **Liabilities** - No member or group of members shall subject this Unit to liability without authorization of the Unit.

ARTICLE IX
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. The Unit organization shall be governed by the *current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised,* on all points not covered by this Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE X
AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any Department Convention or special meeting called for that purpose, by a two-third vote of the delegates present and voting, provided all suggested amendments have been sent to each Unit and District in writing at least sixty (60) days prior to such Convention.

NOTHING HEREIN MAY BE DELETED.

_____Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular Unit Meeting, provided the proposed amendments shall have been read at the previous Unit meeting.

OR

_____Alternate Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular Unit Meeting, provided the proposed amendments shall have been sent in the call for the meeting.

Section 2. These Bylaws shall be automatically amended to conform to the National and Department Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary.

STANDING RULES

Rule No.1 There shall be no reduction of Unit dues at any time during the year. When dues are accepted on the installment plan, no membership cards shall be issued, or per capita dues remitted to Department until full dues are paid.

Rule No. 2 Department officials, when invited by the Unit to participate in a Unit meeting, with the exception of the Department President, shall be paid the expense of travel by the Unit.

Rule No. 3 A new member joining the American Legion Auxiliary prior to the annual National Convention must pay full current annual dues to be eligible for full membership rights, privileges, and benefits. A new member joining after the National Convention may be given by their Unit full membership rights, privileges, and benefits from the date the dues are received through December 31st of the following year.

Rule No. 4

_____The Unit will vote on new and transfer members.

OR

_____The Unit will not vote on new and transfer members.

Rule No. 5

The annual membership dues of this Unit shall be $_____for Senior members and $_____ for Junior members paid annually or for life and shall include the Department and National per capita. This standing rule requires notification of all members and must pass by a 2/3 vote.

OR

The annual membership dues of this Unit shall be $ _____ over that requested for Per Capita (National and Department combined) for Senior members and $ _____over that requested for Per Capita (National and Department combined) for Junior members. This standing rule requires notification of all members and must pass by a 2/3 vote.

Units may add any Standing Rules deemed necessary to facilitate the work of the Unit. Standing Rules may be adopted or suspended at any regular meeting by a majority vote except where noted. They may be amended or rescinded at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided there is a quorum.

Date adopted_____Filed by _____

Unit President: _____

Phone # or email:_____