



THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN

Utilize the Chain of Command

Department staff is always ready to assist in every way possible to help posts, counties and districts to accomplish all of our goals, in membership as well as programs.

Your Department headquarters receives phone calls, letters and e-mails every day from Legionnaires seeking help on any number of issues. In most cases, we are able to take care of the problem or, at least, can refer the questioner to the proper parties who can help. But problems can arise when questions are brought to us on matters which headquarters has no jurisdiction. As a basic “rule of thumb,” Department can most readily help with issues related to membership, American Legion programs, Legionnaire Insurance programs and veterans’ benefits questions. Headquarters cannot help with post elections, problems with operating a post business (bar or restaurant) or concerns of a personal or civil nature. These matters can best be resolved at the post, county and district levels, or in some cases, with help from civil authorities.

A second “rule of thumb” to bear in mind is that questions can often be most easily answered by using the “chain of command” – just like in the military. Effective use of the chain of command increases efficiency at all levels of the organization. The post’s first resource for answers is always your County officers. They often have the answer readily available on issues like post elections and the conduct of meetings. By directing a problem to the county organization, county officers will be better equipped to assist other posts with similar questions. The same applies for county officers seeking guidance. Their best resource is the District organization. Using the chain of command allows each level of the organization to become better informed as to the activities within the districts across the state. All levels become better equipped to handle challenges.

Questions should not be posed directly to the National Headquarters. Directing questions to the National Headquarters will only delay receiving a direct answer. Staff at our National headquarters in Indianapolis simply refers questions back to Department headquarters, where we, in turn, contact the appropriate District officers who then provide guidance to the post. This is all in the interest of promoting efficient operations and maintaining the chain of command. So, whenever possible, use the chain of command and the Department Directory. The directory is available on our website at www.wilegion.org. Just click on “Resources” and “Department Directory.”

The Department staff is always ready, willing and able to assist in every way we can. We urge you to use the website, www.wilegion.org as a resource. Guides and manuals specifically designed to answer most questions about membership, American Legion programs and post activities can be found there. Simply click the “Members” tab, and look under “Resources”.

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