

So You Want to Write a Resolution!

Writing a resolution is merely a formal process in proposing a motion. Several conditions apply to determine when it is appropriate to write a resolution or when to just stand up to propose a motion to change governing documents. First you must understand the different parts of your governing documents.

Our **constitution** is a short document which defines the primary characteristics of the organization such as its name and purpose. We also have **bylaws**. They define how the organization would be managed. Typically they cover structure and operating rules of the organization, including the responsibilities and authority of the officers and committees.

Both the constitution and bylaws are seen as so important that special rules are required to change them. *See Article VII of the National Constitution which stated a 2/3 vote; 'Section 1: This Constitution may be amended at any National convention by a vote of two-thirds of the total authorized representation...'*

Standing rules help implement the bylaws or clarify the details of the administration. Standing rules can be adopted by a majority vote at any business meeting. *Standing rules VII National Chairmen, sets up rules for National Chairmen and gives a brief description but does not go into specific detail of the program.*

Also to help guide us is our policy and procedure. **Policy** is a plan of action to guide decisions and achieve outcomes which includes "what" and the "why". And **procedure** contains the 'what, how, where and the when' of the policies. *Also in the standing rules are details for the Units to include information on the 'how to'; the Unit Handbook; our procedure guide. 'IX Units: They shall be guided by the Unit Handbook of the American Legion Auxiliary....'*

So in this season of reflecting on our governing documents, first assess where your Unit perceives a change is needed as well as the reason for the change. And remember, a change should only be made if it is to better the organization. Then decided in which section of the governing documents it belongs before beginning.

If you deem a resolution is the appropriate action, please use the sample resolution document as a guide; Please note: the approving authority, which you will list as your Unit as you have done in the past, will be changed when it comes before the convention to reflect the 'new' governing board approving the resolution.

As you write your resolution remember to put it in proper format; include as many 'where as' clauses to properly explain the background and reason for the change and in the 'therefore be it resolved' clause, word the sentence to be written as it will read if it is adopted in the governing documents.

SUGGESTED FORM FOR RESOLUTIONS FROM A UNIT TO DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of _____ Unit No. _____
of _____, Washington met in regular session and considered the
matter of _____ *(a short general description of resolution)* _____; and

WHEREAS, _____ *(These are reasons for the change or explanations of the need)* _____
_____; and

WHEREAS, _____ *(Use as many WHEREAS clauses as needed for clarity)* _____
_____; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that _____ *(Needed change worded as it should appear in governing document)* _____
_____; and be it further

RESOLVED, that _____ *(Use as many sections as needed in order to complete the change)* _____

This Resolution was passed by vote of the members assembled at the regular meeting of
_____ *(Official Unit Name)* Unit # _____, of _____ *(City and State)* _____
on the _____ day of _____, 201_____.

President, _____ Unit # _____

Secretary, _____ Unit # _____

NOTE: A Resolution must cover only one subject. -- If two or more items are acted upon by the Unit, send a separate resolution for each one.

"WHEREAS" states reason for the change or explains the need. Use as many paragraphs beginning with "WHEREAS" as needed for clarity.

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED" gives the needed change as advised.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED" is for the added recommendations for the same cause. Use as many as needed in order to make the complete change, recommendation, etc.

This form does not need to be used, but the pattern must be followed. Please type on Unit stationery or simply use plain white paper. A resolution may be passed by the Unit with a majority vote.