

**1 THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN  
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMITTEE  
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Authorization:**

This committee was authorized in its present form at the Department Convention, July 20, 1975, although the Committee had been established at an earlier date.

**Membership:**

Subject to the Department Commander's discretion, and with the approval of the Department Executive Committee, the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) Committee of the Department of Michigan will normally consist of five (5) regular members, one from each Zone, with vote, and two (2) alternate members, without vote, unless they are serving in the absence of a regular member. One of the regular members will serve as Chairman of the VA&R Committee. The Department Commander shall be an ex-officio member of the committee, with vote, and the Department Adjutant shall be an ex-officio member, without vote (*DEC Action, April 4, 1992*)

**Per the American Legion Department of Michigan Bylaws (June 2019)**

**Article V Section 1 (Sentence 3): Department Commander** The Commander shall appoint all standing committees, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, except as otherwise provided.

**Article VI, Section 4:** All committee members shall be appointed and may be removed for cause by the Department Commander, with the approval of the Department Executive Committee. The Department Commander shall name the Chairman of each committee to serve until the next Department Convention.

Members that are on mandated committees (Permanent Time and Place), or serving in an Alternate or Assistant position on the Department Executive Committee, may also serve on an appointive Department committee but not in a Chairmanship, with the exception of the Permanent Time and Place Chairman, who may serve in that role.

No member shall receive per diem and travel pay more than once per call, regardless of the number of committees they serve on."

**Article VI, Section 5:** The term of office of all members of Department Committees shall be staggered so that the term of one-half of the Committee shall expire at the close of the annual Department Convention each year. Appointments, except when a shorter term shall be necessary to comply with this provision, shall be for a term of two (2) years each.

**Section 6:** No Legionnaire may be appointed to serve on more than one regular standing appointive Department Committee at any one time.

"Alternate members will be appointed to serve a one-year term and will be designated as first and second alternate." (DEC April 20, 1974)

At the first meeting of the new term, the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee will elect one of its members to serve as Vice Chairman and one to serve as Secretary during that term of office. The Vice Chairman shall assume all duties of the Chairman in that person's absence.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee is to formulate and recommend to the Department Executive Committee of The American Legion, Department of Michigan, policies, plans and programs as they concern veterans of World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Persian Gulf and all Wars and Conflicts as of August 2, 1990, as recognized by Congress, in their physical and vocational rehabilitation, education, social and economic readjustment, entitlement to compensation and pension, and the support of their dependents and survivors. The VA&R Committee will oversee the effectiveness of The American Legion's programs of services to these war veterans and their dependents in claims for benefits administered by both Federal and State governments.

**Meetings:**

Three regular meetings of the Department VA&R Committee may be held during the fiscal year of the Department. The Chairman and/or other representatives, as designated, may be authorized to attend the Annual Budget Meeting of the Finance/Personnel Committee for the purpose of presenting the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation budget.

**(Per the Department Bylaws) Article VIII, Section 2: Expenses** - No Department officer or member of any committee shall be paid or reimbursed from the funds of the Department for any travel or other expense incurred upon Department business, unless a travel order or other suitable order, duly Called by the Department Commander or duly signed by the Department Adjutant, shall accompany the order for payment thereof.

**Meeting Schedule:**

	Member	Chairman
Fall Leadership Conference	One day	Three days
Winter Meeting	One day	Two days
Department Convention	One day	Three days

**Special Meetings:**

Necessary special meetings may be held at Department Headquarters, via telephone conference, or internet conference capability (provided all members can hear each member during proceedings), with no mileage nor per diem authorized. Lunch may be provided by Committee funds with prior approval of the Department Commander.

**Per diem and/or mileage:**

Per diem and/or mileage, if any, and only upon the authority of the Department Commander, shall be in accordance with current published Department policy, as recommended by the Department Finance/Personnel Committee and approved by the Department Executive Committee.

**Minutes:**

Written minutes of each meeting shall be recorded by the Secretary and shall constitute the Chairman's report to the Department Executive Committee or the delegates to the Department Convention and will be included in the next official proceeding of the meeting, conference or convention, thereby being made a permanent record for retention at the Department office. Minutes of any special meetings, adoption of motions or resolutions approved at any time occurring between Department meetings, conferences or convention shall be incorporated into the next official proceedings. Recommendations and/or resolutions must be presented in proper form to the Department Executive Committee or delegates at the Department Convention.

**Transacting Business:**

The committee may transact business by mail, telephone, and e-mail, and other technologies including, but not limited to, Skype, Facetime, conference calls, and webinar/video chat, provided all members see/hear all votes made. If an e-mail vote is implemented, each response must be forwarded to all members of the Committee. If standard mail, the voting shall be considered closed at the end of seven (7) business days provided a majority of members of the committee have returned to the Chairman their votes by that time, or it shall be considered closed at anytime prior thereto and when all the members have returned their votes. Other technical votes include a telephone conference or web conference provided each member can see and/or hear other members' votes. In the event one-third (1/3) members of the committee objects in writing, the matter shall not be decided and will be considered as the first order of business at the next regular meeting or special meeting and the Chairman shall notify the committee of the action taken. *(Rev. 3.12.17, 6.24.18 Res 18-C-15)*

**Chairman:**

The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and, in the event of his absence, the Vice Chairman shall preside.

The Chairman shall, when possible, attend National and Area Rehabilitation Conferences. The Vice Chairman shall attend these meetings when the Chairman is unable to attend.

The Chairman and committee shall plan the policies and programs of the VA&R Committee to be presented at the Department Executive Committee meeting for approval at the Fall Conference.

Between meetings of the VA&R Committee, full power of the committee shall be vested in the Chairman, subject to ratification by the Committee by means of a mail vote or vote at the next regular or special meeting.

The Chairman, with the Committee, will act on all resolutions assigned to them and will also prepare resolutions pertaining to all phases of veterans' rehabilitation legislation for presentation at conferences, meetings and conventions.

An article for the Michigan Legionnaire is to be submitted to the Editor, by the Chairman, at least once a year.

An Annual Report is to be written and submitted to the Editor by May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

**Adjutant:**

**In accordance with the Department Bylaws, Article V, Section 4:** Department Adjutant shall be the chief administrative officer of the Department. The Adjutant shall be the custodian of and shall cause to be kept all official Department records. The Adjutant shall perform all administrative and clerical acts necessary to conduct the business of the Department. The Adjutant shall receive all dues and monies from Posts, keep a record thereof, and shall deposit the same in the name of "The American Legion, Department of Michigan" in a bank or banks as ordered by the Finance/Personnel Committee, with the approval of the Department Executive Committee. The Adjutant shall perform any other duties as may be directed to do by the Department Commander or the Department Executive Committee. The Adjutant shall receive such salary as shall be fixed by the Finance/Personnel Committee, subject to the approval of the Department Executive Committee. The Adjutant shall be reimbursed for actual traveling expenses while in the performance of the necessary duties of the office.

The Adjutant is responsible for the monies received from the State of Michigan through the medium of appropriations, or from other sources, and shall deposit them properly in the depositories specified by the Finance/Personnel Committee.

The disbursement of VA&R funds, within the annual budget, shall be at the Adjutant's discretion. The Adjutant shall check and sign all VA&R funds, disbursing checks and vouchers and mail copies of supporting vouchers to the Chairman of the committee.

The Adjutant shall, at all times, keep the Department Director of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation posted on the following for purposes of VA&R only:

1. Names of Post Service Officers and Post Commanders and/or Post Adjutants
2. Time and place of regular meetings of Posts therein by Districts

The Adjutant shall prepare an annual budget for consideration by the House Appropriations Committee and the Department Finance/Personnel Committee in cooperation with the Department Director and the Department Chairman of VA & R.

**Department Director:**

The Department of Michigan shall employ a Department Director, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, who shall supervise and carry out the VA & R programs, as determined and outlined by the VA & R Committee. The Director shall be interviewed and hired by the Department Commander, Adjutant and Chairman of the VA & R Committee. The Director shall be responsible to the Department Adjutant, who is the Chief Administrator.

The Director's responsibilities shall include but not be limited to:

- The personnel of the VA & R offices and shall be responsible for the proper functioning of the offices within the VA&R budget.
- All contracts with the Veterans Administration and the offices of the National Rehabilitation Committee, its branch offices and field representatives.
- Provide for liaisons with and guidance of the Service Officers of the Sons of The American Legion, Department of Michigan.
- Disseminating all information available on Rehabilitation Legislation, Veterans Preference and Civil Service employment matters, to the officers of the Department and its Posts and, insofar as budget limitations will permit, the membership of the Department of Michigan.
- Attend National and Area Rehabilitation Conferences

The Director shall not have other conflicting employment while holding the office of Department Director, nor shall he be a member of any standing Department committee, or an active participant in policy making groups in this or any other section of The American Legion, except as otherwise provided by the Department Constitution and By-Laws.

**Veterans Service Officers:**

The Department shall employ Veterans Service Officers who will be under the direction and supervision of the Department Director and whose duties will be provided for in part in the job description identified as class code number 150 on file in the office of the Department Adjutant.

**Funds:**

Expenditures of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation funds shall provide the maximum of administrative services in the handling of rehabilitation matters. The annual VA&R budget will not provide for direct relief or welfare. The committee will petition the Department of Michigan to provide a specified minimum amount to be distributed for these purposes, under the direction of the Department Adjutant.

The VA&R Fund shall be utilized solely to further the benefits which accrue to the veterans and dependents of veterans of the State of Michigan as a whole, whether members of The American Legion or not and shall, under no circumstances, be used to the advantage of any particular groups of veterans or any District or section of the State, to the disadvantage of veterans of another group or District or section.

**Budget Statements:**

Quarterly statements of the VA&R budget shall be mailed to all members of the VA&R Committee, members of the Department Executive Committee, the Department Commander and all Department Veterans Service Officers.

**Procedure:**

Parliamentary procedure used to conduct meetings of this committee shall be governed by the Department of Michigan, The American Legion, Constitution and By-Laws. All questions not covered by the Department of Michigan Constitution and By-Laws will be governed by the most current edition of "Roberts Rules of Order."

**Quorum:**

A quorum shall exist at any meeting of the VA&R Committee when a majority thereof shall be present, or shall have replied to mail polling. At no time shall lack of quorum prevent those present from proceeding with the program but, where there is no quorum, no vote shall be taken.

**Amendments:**

These procedures may be amended in content, but not in format, by a majority of the members of the Committee, submitted to the Internal Affairs Committee for review and recommendation, and approval by the Department Executive Committee.

## VAVS/VHVS SUBCOMMITTEE

### **Authorization:**

This committee was authorized in its present form at Fall Conference, September, 1976, although the committee had been established as a sub-committee of Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation at an earlier date.

### **Membership:**

Subject to the Department Commander's discretion, and with the approval of the Department Executive Committee, the VAVS/VHVS Committee of the Department of Michigan will normally consist of seven (7) members, with vote. The Committee shall be made up of the five (5) VAVS representatives serving the five (5) Veteran Administration hospitals and the two (2) VHVS representatives serving the Michigan Veterans facilities in the State of Michigan, for a total of seven (7) representatives.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the VAVS/VHVS Committee is the careful integration of preferred services of members of voluntary service organizations and individuals into the overall Veterans Administration program for the veteran patient and the integration of the hospital into the community thinking and living.

The official representation of The American Legion on the Veterans Administration Advisory Committee is the channel through which all services and information from The American Legion to the hospital should flow. It is also the channel through which all requests and information from the hospital to the organization should flow.

### **Meeting Schedule:**

	Member	Chairman
Fall Leadership Conference	One day	Three days
Winter Meeting	One day	Two days
Department Convention	One day	Three days

**Approved:** DEC September 22, 1978

**Amended:** DEC July 19, 1984; September 19, 1986; April 4, 1992, September 16, 2005, June 17, 2006, September 19, 2009, March 12, 2017, September 23, 2017, February 18, 2018, June 24, 2018, Feb. 16, 2020