

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE
NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of this organization shall be the **NORTH DAKOTA VETERANS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**, hereinafter referred to as the council.

ARTICLE II
OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the council shall be:

1. To develop a statewide, intelligent, aggressive and serviceable council for the purpose of promoting all activities found to be for the good of all veterans and dependents.
2. To provide a practical means by which veterans organizations throughout the state may effectively contribute to the betterment of all veterans in three principle phases, as follows:
 - a. Legislation – Develop positive legislation affecting veterans and dependents as a whole and all organizations represented.
 - b. Programs – Support programs of well being for all veterans and dependents and all veterans' organizations; principally health care, employment and training, and social welfare.
 - c. Information – Establish a system of public information to make veteran information available to the public, on behalf of all veterans and dependents and veterans represented.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP

1. Organization Membership

Any veteran organization aspiring to voting membership in the North Dakota Veterans Legislative Council must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be an organization made up of veterans who must have specific criteria and eligibility dates for membership.
- b. Be an organization having national United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) accreditation.
- c. Have functional National, Department and local Post or Chapter status.
- d. Have statewide membership of 250, with at least five Posts or Chapters. If the membership falls below 250 that organization will have until the next annual organizational meeting to satisfy the aforementioned criteria.
- e. Hold an annual State Department convention.
- f. Be fiscally able to pay the dues assessment to the Veterans Legislative Council, of a minimum of \$150 a year.

2. Voting Membership

Membership of this council shall consist of the Department Commander, the Department Adjutant or Secretary, and one additional member of the represented organization to be elected or appointed from each department of the following veterans organizations: The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS (American Veterans), and Vietnam Veterans of America. No member of the North Dakota Veterans Legislative Council shall hold concurrent membership on the North Dakota Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs.

3. Honorary Membership

Honorary membership shall be granted to the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs of North Dakota, the State Director of Veterans Employment and Training of the U.S. Department of Labor, the Administrator of the North Dakota Veterans Home, the Department Service Officer or Claims Representative of each of the five member veterans organizations, the Chairman of the North Dakota Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs, a representative of the Veterans of World War I, U.S.A., the County Veterans Service Officers Association, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, and the Presidents of the Veterans Organization Auxiliary units that hold an active National Charter with their parent organization, who shall serve only as advisors to the council and as directed by the council.

4. Ex-Officio Membership

Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 2, each voting organization shall have the option of allowing their adjutant and commander to serve as ex-officio non-voting members of the council, and may, instead, name up to three organization representatives who may serve in the long term.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the council shall be a President, Vice President, and a Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 2. The officers shall be elected by and from the member organizations in good standing at the regular reorganizational meeting of the council in the odd numbered year for a term of two years and until their successors are duly elected and qualified. Any officer may succeed himself/herself for any number of terms.

Section 3. The officers shall be nominated from the floor and a majority of votes cast shall be necessary for the election of each officer.

Section 4. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice-President shall succeed to the Presidency. Vacancies in the offices of Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer shall be filled by the council in the same manner as used in the election of officers.

Section 5. The officers of the council shall have such powers and duties as are hereinafter prescribed.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular meetings of the council will be held upon the call of the President, at such times and places as may be selected by him/her, and upon due notice to council members by the Secretary; except that the annual reorganization meeting of the council shall be held within 3 months of the end of the current fiscal year. All meetings can be held in-person or virtually (video conference).

Section 2. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President or upon written request of two department commanders with notice of such meeting being properly given. Such notice shall include the purpose for which the special meeting is being called.

ARTICLE VI AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any meeting with prior notice of not less than ten days notice of such amendments being properly given all members.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The president shall preside at all meetings of the council. In the absence of the president, the vice-president shall preside. The president shall be empowered to appoint publicity director.

Section 2. The secretary/Treasurer shall receive, expend and account for funds of the council, keep the records of the council, notify officers of their election, keep a roll of members, handle the correspondence, make annual reports in writing, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office of secretary/treasurer. The council shall furnish a surety bond for the secretary/treasurer payable to the council in the sum of one thousand (\$1,000) dollars. The secretary/treasurer shall receive a fee as approved by the president and council and reimbursement for all expenses as approved by the president and council.

ARTICLE II QUORUM PROVISIONS AND SEATING

Section 1. Eight members of the council shall form a quorum for the purpose of conducting business at all meetings, providing there is at least one member from each organization present and at least one officer to conduct the meeting. Providing further, that the Department Commander of each organization shall have the power to appoint a member of his/her organization to act in place of a regular member who, for good cause, cannot be present at a council meeting.

Section 2. Any organization not represented for two meetings within one year will automatically forfeit their right to serve on the council. To retain seating on the council, the organization must reapply and wait until the next reorganization meeting following application to be seated. Dues to the council must be paid at the time of seating. The provisions of this section do not prevent the organization from serving in an ex-officio counsel and resource capacity.

ARTICLE III DUES

Section 1. Annual dues, payable in advance, shall be required from, and paid by, each voting member organization on an equal basis in the amount of \$150.00 paid within the first 3 months following the end of the fiscal year.

Section 2. The council may set special assessments of the voting member organizations for such purposes as deemed necessary, such amounts to be decided by a vote of the council at the regular meeting prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

ARTICLE IV COMMITTEES

Section 1. A committee to be known as the Legislative Committee shall function under the partnership of the council and be tasked with the duties of presenting council originated legislation favorable to veterans, and testifying on behalf of legislation that is unfavorable to veterans, as directed by the council. This committee shall be composed of two members from each of the veterans' organizations represented as voting members of the council. They shall be appointed by the organizations before the council's regular annual meeting in each odd numbered year and shall serve a term of at least two years unless replaced by the appointing organization. They shall select their own chairperson and shall work with and coordinate their efforts with the legislative liaison director. With the exception of the chairman, whose expenses shall be paid from within the treasury of the council, travel expenses of each appointee shall be covered by the appointing organization at a rate determined by that organization's governing body.

Section 2. Within the council will be the following standing subcommittees, composed of members of the council and appointed by the president at the regular annual meeting.

- A. Legislation Subcommittee – to review and propose to the council legislation of benefit to veterans.
- B. Programs Subcommittee – to develop programs of benefit to veterans to include the principle concerns of health care, employment and training, and social welfare, and to propose and prioritize the funding of such programs.
- C. Public Information Subcommittee – to develop a program of public information and the medias for dispensing such information to veterans and the public, and to develop and promote public awareness of the needs and concerns of veterans.

Section 3. The president, with the approval of the council, may appoint any other committees as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE V
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 1. The president and secretary/treasurer shall appoint legal representation who shall serve only as legal consultant to the council with no voting privilege. This appointment shall be made at the earliest possible date following the council's annual meeting. Only travel expenses incurred will be paid by the council.

Section 2. Council action on the three principle phases of its objectives shall be unanimously endorsed by its member organizations.

- a. When three (3) members of an organization are present and voting, a pro or con vote by two (2) of the three members will be binding on that organization; when two (2) members of an organization are present and voting, a tie vote within an organization will constitute a rejection of the motion by that organization; when one (1) member of an organization is present and voting, the pro or con vote of that member will be binding on that organization.
- b. The council president can vote with the organization he represents and can vote as he sees fit.
- c. In a case where a unanimous vote is required for passage of a motion, a tie vote within any organization will be a rejection of the motion and the motion would be lost..

Section 3. No officer or member of the council shall employ or discharge anyone responsible to the council without official action being taken by the council as a whole.

Section 4. The president and secretary/treasurer or their appointed representative from the council shall serve as members of all special or subcommittees within or without the council appointed for the benefit of the council.

Section 5. All resolutions presented to the council must first be approved in writing by the state department of one of the member organizations before being considered by the council.

Section 6. Roberts Rules of Order newly revised shall govern the meetings of the council, where not otherwise specially provided for.

Section 7. The council shall appoint a qualified veteran, to be known as the Legislative Liaison Director, to coordinate legislative matters between the council, its legislative committee, and the various veterans' organizations. The director shall be

guided by the adopted job description in his duties and shall serve as directed by the council. The director shall have all allowable expenses in the performance of his duties paid and shall receive such fee as agreed to by the council.

ARTICLE VI
AMENDMENTS

The By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any meeting with prior notice of not less than ten days notice of such amendments being properly given all members.

AMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 19TH DAY OF MAY 2022

AMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 23RD DAY OF JULY 1990

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 23RD DAY OF NOVEMBER 991

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 5TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 1993

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 16TH DAY OF JULY 1994

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 9TH DAY OF MARCH 1996

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 23RD DAY OF NOVEMBER 1996

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 17TH DAY OF JANUARY 1997

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 14TH DAY OF MARCH 1998

AMMENDED BY COUNCIL ACTION AND
EFFECTIVE THIS 14TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2019

