

WESTERN CONFERENCE BY-LAWS
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

As approved July 22, 2023

ARTICLE I

Name

This association shall be known as the Western Conference (WC), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) of the United States.

ARTICLE II

Membership

Section 1. The membership shall consist of all paid-up Departments to include: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Pacific Areas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

Section 2. Additional Departments and their membership may be added by submitting an application to the Western Conference and receiving approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the eligible Departments within the Conference voting their delegate strength.

ARTICLE III

Meetings

Section 1. The Conference shall meet a minimum of two times per year, at the National Convention and at the Mid-Winter Conference.

Section 2. The Conference shall meet at the call of the presiding officer during the National Convention and at such times as the presiding officer deems necessary during the National Convention with concurrence of a majority of the State and Department Commanders comprising the Western Conference who are present at the National Convention.

Section 3. The Conference shall also meet annually on a date set by the Host Convention Committee with the approval of the Conference Chairman during the fourth quarter each year.

Section 4. A special meeting of the Conference may be called by the Chairman of the Conference with the concurrence of a majority of the State and Department Commanders comprising the Western Conference or by a majority of the State and Department Commanders comprising the Western Conference. No business shall be transacted at any special meeting except that for which the meeting is called.

Section 5. Notice of all meetings must be given to the Departments comprising the Western Conference. The notice must allow a reasonable time for each Department to participate. For in-person meetings a 30-day notice is required. For an electronic meeting a 10-day notice is required.

Section 6. The Conference may use electronic means to hold a Conference meeting provided that the technology used allows all participating members to communicate with each other simultaneously and that additional rules pertaining to the conduct of the electronic meeting are adopted.

Section 7. The Western Conference shall allow for electronic attendance, and participation, at each regular, special or other meeting of the Conference.

ARTICLE IV

Officers

Section 1. The Officers of the Conference shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Chaplain. They shall be elected and installed at the mid-year meeting of the Western Conference but will not take office until the conclusion of the meeting of the National Convention. The Chairman upon assuming office shall appoint a Secretary and Sergeant-at-Arms. All committees and committee chairman not specifically provided for by the Western Conference Bylaws or by order of the Western Conference members at an official meeting shall be appointed by the Conference Chairman and serve at their pleasure.

Section 2. The nomination and voting of all National positions shall take place at the first meeting of the Western Conference at the National Convention. If the National Convention is anticipated to be cancelled or the Conference otherwise may not be able to meet at that time. The elections will be held at a Special Meeting prior to the previously planned date of election of National officers and notice shall be given to the other Conferences of the endorsements from the Western Conference.

ARTICLE V

Dues and Assessments

Section 1. The annual dues shall be \$25.00 (Twenty-five Dollars) for each Department plus \$15 (Fifteen Dollars) for each delegate vote to include the three initial votes allotted to each Department. The number of delegate votes each Department is entitled to is defined in Article VII, Section 3. Dues and assessments are due and payable on 1 January of each year. Current dues must be paid for a Department to cast its delegate strength vote at a Western Conference meeting.

Section 2. Changes in dues or assessments require an approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at the Western Conference meeting.

Section 3. The treasurer shall be required to keep a record of all receipts and expenditures and to make a complete financial report at each meeting of the Western Conference. The treasurer is authorized to administer all financial affairs of the VFW Western Conference during their term. Only the treasurer's signature is required on checks and other financial records.

ARTICLE VI

Committees

Section 1. Steering Committee. The Western Conference Chairman shall appoint a Steering Committee Chairman from a pool of Past National Commander-in-Chiefs if available, otherwise from the delegates at large. The Conference Chairman may also appoint additional members to the committee at their discretion.

Section 2. Time & Place Committee. It will consist of not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members, with not more than one (1) member from any Department. The Committee Chairman will be appointed by the Western Conference Chairman. The Committee will recommend the time and place of each Mid-Winter Conference. The site of the Mid-Winter Conference shall be selected three (3) years in advance, at the conference meeting following the National Convention. All bids must be in writing and submitted by a Department in the Western Conference to the chairman of the Time and Place Committee no later than one (1)

week prior to the conference meeting. Paragraphs 1 through 4 below are strongly recommended minimums in bidding for the Western Conference meeting:

- (1) Letter from local government inviting the Western Conference and committing to acceptance of it.
- (2) Description of available and promised transportation arrangements.
- (3) Letters describing lodging availability for at least 150 rooms minimum. Include accommodation brochures if available.
- (4) Arrangements for banquet facilities for a minimum of 350 people.

Section 3. Bylaw Review Committee. The Western Conference shall have a Bylaw review committee which is charged with reviewing the Western Conference Bylaws on an annual basis and submitting, in advance, any recommended changes to the Chairman. The committee shall be a standing committee of four members in good standing as follows:

1. 4-Year rotation
2. Year 1 Member shall serve as Chairman.
3. Year 2 Member shall serve as Vice Chairman.
4. All Members shall rotate in ascending order, starting at the year 4 Member and thereafter moving "up" each year to their fourth year as the Year 1 Member and chairman.
5. The Conference shall appoint the Year 4 Member upon election to office.
6. No two members of the committee shall be from the same Department.
7. No member shall hold a committee position unless they have not held a position on this committee in the past two (2) years.

ARTICLE VII

Voting and Quorum

Section 1. To constitute a quorum there must be a majority of Departments of the Western Conference present at roll call. The State or Department Commander of any Department, if unable to attend, must notify the Western Conference Chairman. In the absence of the Commander, the traditional plan of succession shall take place in which case the Sr. Vice Commander, then the Jr. Vice Commander shall be the representative at the Western Conference. In any case in which neither the Commander, Sr. Vice Commander, nor the Jr. Vice Commander are in attendance then the Commander shall supply the name of the designated representative to the Conference Chairman.

Section 2. In the conducting of routine business, each Conference member in good standing physically present at the meeting shall be entitled to one (1) vote. All other voting, unless otherwise specified, shall be by each Department present at the meeting voting its delegate strength. The order of voting when Departments are voting their delegate strength shall be based on the flip of a coin:

1. Tails: A-Z
2. Heads: Z-A

Section 3. The voting strength of each Department is as follows: Each Department is given a base strength of 3 votes. In addition, each Department will receive one (1) additional vote for each 10,000 members or fraction thereof. The total members for each Department will be based on the Quartermaster General's membership tally as of the preceding June 30th.

Section 4. The State or Department Commander, or their designated representative, shall cast all delegate strength votes for their respective Department at all Conference meetings. The vote must be cast exactly as it was recorded at the official caucus, with each Department member in attendance receiving their equal share of the Department's delegate vote. All votes shall be expressed in whole numbers with no fractional votes allowed. A roll call may be required and entered upon the record at the call of any three (3) delegates representing three (3) separate Departments.

Section 5. The Western Conference will elect their candidate for National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief at the National Convention one (1) year prior to the National Convention that they are to be installed in that office.

ARTICLE VIII

Rules of Order

Section 1. Meetings

- A. Roll call of Officers of Western Conference.
- B. Roll call of Council Members and Departments.
- C. Remarks of Chairman.
- D. Appointments of Steering Committee.
- E. Selection of Conference candidate(s) for National VFW officer(s)
- F. Reading of the minutes.
- G. Financial report.
- H. Nomination and election of Conference Officers.
- I. Appointment of Conference Officers.
- J. Unfinished business.
- K. New business.
- L. Adjournment.

Section 2. Any or the above rules of order may be suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates of the eligible Departments present and voting at an official meeting.

Section 3. Procedures not outlined herein shall be according to the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised".

ARTICLE IX

Miscellaneous

Section 1. All committees and committee chairman not specifically provided for by the Western Conference By-Laws or by order of the Western Conference members at an official meeting shall be appointed by the Conference Chairman and serve at their pleasure.

Section 2. Definition: All references of "his-her-their" is meant to be gender neutral throughout this document.

Section 3. Definition: to be present for quorum and voting requirements means that the member is either physically or electronically present when electronic attendance has been Authorized under Article III – Meetings.

Section 4. The Western Conference recognizes that there are four Conferences (Western, Big 10, Eastern, and Southern) within the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Each Conference shall put forth a candidate for National VFW positions on a 4-year rotational basis as follows:

1. Jr. Vice Commander in Chief
2. National Chaplain
3. Judge Advocate General
4. Surgeon General

After selection for any of the above positions, and before election to office, if a designee is no longer able to serve, the Conference from which the selection was made shall select a replacement designee. Upon making such selection, the Conference shall inform the other three Conferences for endorsement. No Conference shall have more than one representative serving as either the Commander in Chief, Sr. Vice Commander in Chief, jr. Vice Commander in Chief, or Jr. Vice Commander in Chief Designee. This bylaw shall only be valid upon ratification of the same, or similar in material bylaw, by each of the four Conferences.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

The above By-Laws can be amended at any Western Conference meeting at the National Convention provided the following requirements are met:

- a. Any proposed amendments must be sent to the Review Committee no later than March 1st prior to the National Convention. The Review Committee shall review each proposed amendment for appropriateness and make accept or reject recommendations to the Conference. The Committee shall make their recommendations available to the Conference Secretary no later than April 1st prior to the National convention for delivery to Departments by May 1st.
- b. The Conference Secretary shall notify each Department Commander and Adjutant by mail or email of any amendments to be voted on along with the Review Committee recommendations.
- c. It must be voted on at a duly constituted meeting at the National Convention.
- d. A two-thirds (2/3) approval vote of the eligible Department's members present and voting at the meeting is required for passage of an amendment.

These By-Laws were approved July 22nd, 2023.

Jeffery Eiler

Jeffery Eiler
Chairman, Western Conference

Thomas Black

Thomas Black
Secretary / Treasurer, Western Conference