



The Royal Canadian Legion

Ontario Command Leadership Development

BRANCH OPERATIONS INFORMATION

Every member makes a difference

The Legion's future will depend on dedicated knowledgeable members leading it in the right direction.

This brochure provides a basic overview of the operational and administrative procedures that are needed to ensure the success of a Legion Branch. It provides guidance and needs to be read in conjunction with existing Legion Manuals to understand the big picture. Chat with your Branch Leadership Development Chairman if you have questions.

Local branches are the heart of the Legion, a place known and respected in your community. With so many ways to get involved within the organization, there is something for everyone.

Being a Legion member is a great way to support our Veterans and our community. With members sharing their life skills - they have much to offer as we work together to improve the lives of those who served and their families and to help maintain our Legion Branch and its activities. Members may be shy at first about getting involved or asking questions, this is normal.

What can members do to help?

Attendance at Branch meetings is the opportunity for Members to meet the Officers and committee chairmen, to exercise their right to take part in the decision making and keeps them informed on upcoming Legion news and branch events which might be of interest.

All Legion branches exercise autonomy with regard to their own affairs provided they are within the area under their jurisdiction and within the provisions of the General Bylaws. The Legion is a non-profit membership-based organization. A per capita tax from dues paid by the members supports the operation of Provincial and Dominion Commands and the Legion Magazine.

The method of nominating and electing Offices is described in the General Bylaws for Branches (GBLB) section of the Provincial Bylaws.

THE BRANCH PRESIDENT: must be a voting member in good standing and have served at least one term on the Branch Executive Committee to be eligible to be elected President. Exercises General supervision and control over the Executive Committee and the business of the Branch. Presides at all meetings of the Branch unless the Branch has a Branch Chairman, enforces order and strict observance of the bylaws. Has the deciding vote on any matter that has resulted in a tied vote. Is an ex-officio member of all committees except complaints and nominations. More detail of the duties of the President can be found in the Legion Officers Manual.

THE BRANCH VICE PRESIDENTS: must be voting members in good standing and have served at least one term on the Branch Executive Committee to be eligible to be elected Vice President. They assist the President in the performance of his duties, upon request, accept Chairmanship of a Standing Committee if appointed. Attends other meetings and Conventions when requested. A Vice President is “President in training”

THE BRANCH SECRETARY: elected or appointed according to Branch Regulations and is unpaid. If paid, other provisions in the GBLB must be met. Keeps Minutes of all meetings and have on hand the minute book, correspondence and any other documentation likely to be transacted at meetings. Is responsible for the maintenance, retention and safekeeping of all records and is custodian of the Branch Seal. Receives all complaints against Branch Members excluding those lodged against the Secretary and completes the duties detailed in Article III of the General Bylaws. Ensures that all members receive the required Welcome documents and Legion badge. Further details of this position can be found in the Legion Officers Manual and the Branch Secretary Handbook. The Branch Secretary is scribe, organizer and co-ordinator, right-hand to the Branch President, and the key person to the Branch organization.

THE BRANCH TREASURER: responsibilities include recording all financial transactions; keeping an accurate record of all monies received or paid out by the Branch, available at the Branch to be open for inspection of the Executive committee at all times; deposits funds into a Bank(s) approved by the Branch; providing detailed monthly financial report to the Executive and Membership as required. As well, the Treasurer processes daily cash income, allocates the receipts into their appropriate accounts, balances the cash and deposits at the bank; codes and checks invoices for payment approval and if cash flow is a problem, chooses which bills to pay and which to hold; reviews payroll time sheets to authorize payroll; oversees the preparation of Government payments, plus other responsibilities as listed in the Legion Officers Manual. Because of the complexity of this position, many branches are hiring a part-time qualified bookkeeper to assist the Treasurer. This person would have knowledge of government reporting, payroll, and usually computerized accounting

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: branch officers, each assigned Standing Committee chairmanships pursuant to GBLB 501, elected in the number as authorized by Branch Regulations, with the President, Vice-Presidents, plus Branch Secretary and Branch Treasurer and a Branch Chairman (if applicable), comprise the Branch Management Team. All appointments must be made and approved by the General Membership at its first Meeting after 01 June.

THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: may be appointed by the Executive Committee or elected by the general membership of the branch. He is not a member of the branch executive committee by the authority of office, unless authorized by Branch Regulations. Assists the President in maintaining order during General meetings and ensures that only those eligible are permitted to attend the

meetings, is responsible for the colours and branch insignia, ceremonial duties and to perform other duties assigned to him by the President. His duties do not include that of surveillance of the licensed premises or social events. This is the responsibility of the Elected Officers and the Executive Committee

BRANCH CHAPLAIN: A branch may appoint a Chaplain or Chaplains who look after the spiritual leadership of the branch. The Chaplain officiates at dedications, memorial services, funerals of our comrades, and carries out such other duties compatible with the office, as the President may request.

Standing Committees: (Executive)

TRACK & FIELD COMMITTEE: promotes the sport of Track & Field to the local schools and athletic clubs in the community and within the Branch to participate in the Legion's Track & Field Program at all levels.

VETERANS SERVICES/SERVICE OFFICER: operates in accordance with the Veterans Services Handbook and deals with all inquiries and provides assistance to all Veterans not only Legion Members and their dependents in a complete and absolute confidential manner. The Committee becomes familiar with all aspects of Veterans Legislation and ensures that all veterans in the area are receiving the benefits to which they are entitled, particularly those that are housed in Seniors Residences Homes or Hospitals and may not be aware of their entitlements. The sick/visiting sub-committee reports to the Veterans Services Committee which also works closely with the Legion Seniors Chairman

SPORTS COMMITTEE: organizes internal sports activities for members - such as darts, cards, snooker, etc. and arranges participation in Legion tournaments.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: establishes recruiting methods, processes new applicants and arranges welcome ceremonies, processes membership renewals and advises members about all Legion benefits. The duties related to membership (i.e., recruitment, renewals, administrative functions, etc.) cannot be performed by one person. Dominion Command uses a computerized membership system to maintain accurate membership information and to process and produce membership cards. Information manuals are available to assist branch secretaries and membership chairmen who are involved in membership processing.

YOUTH EDUCATION COMMITTEE: organizes and promotes the Legion's literary, poster and public speaking contests with local schools and youth community.

POPPY & REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE: ensures the Poppy Campaign and all its duties are carried out in accordance with the Poppy Manual; administers the Poppy Trust Fund; plans and organizes all events connected with Remembrance Day; ensures adequate records are maintained in accordance with Poppy Trust Fund Committee requirements and that all reporting deadlines are adhered to.

LEGION SENIORS COMMITTEE: develops and maintains a program to aid, assist and support any activity which will benefit the seniors in the Branch and surrounding area; organizes seniors' activities within the Branch allowing seniors' meetings, providing meals to seniors' groups etc.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: functions as the educational arm of the Branch to its members on all aspects of the Legion and Branch operations and activities as approved by the Executive; organizes seminars and workshops for Branch Officers, members in general and new members in particular through the New Member Orientation program.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE: ensures that every opportunity is taken to publicize the activities of the Branch through whatever media is available in order to enhance the image of the Branch and The Royal Canadian Legion within the community and the surrounding area, will be the contact point for any community inquiry. If decided by the Branch a Branch Bulletin is published and distributed regularly to Branch members utilizing email when possible and that a Branch Scrapbook is maintained to preserve the history of the Branch and to enter these into District or Provincial competitions; ensures that all significant activities of the Branch are communicated to the Legion Magazine through the Ontario Correspondent.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES (not executive)

Financial Review Committee: conducts regular checks on the Branch's Financial Systems and procedures - checks that the Branch's internal controls and procedures and the laws of the land are in compliance. No experience is required. Training and information is available including an easy to follow handbook available on the Ontario Command website. www.on.legion.ca

The following are other Special Committees that can be appointed by the Branch and these committees' functions are defined by the Branch as needed...

- Honours & Awards Committee
- Cadet Liaison Officer
- Canteen Services committee
- Constitution & Laws Committee
- Charitable Foundation Committee
- Ways & Means/fundraising Committee
- Lottery administration
- House & Property Committee
- Entertainment Committee

LEGION DRESS

Details of Legion Dress can be found in the Ritual Awards & Protocol Manual. The Executive Committee Members and Sergeant at Arms are required to wear Legion Dress for formal and ceremonial occasions and at General Meetings.

LEGION PROGRAMS & MANUALS

For a more detailed description of Legion the above named Executive positions and available programs please refer to one or more of the following manuals available at the Branch:

The General Bylaws

An Act to Incorporate: The Royal Canadian Legion

Provincial Command Bylaws
Ritual Awards & Protocol Manual
Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings
Sports Guide
Membership Manual
Public Relations Manual
Service Officers Handbook
Chaplains Manual
Branch Regulations
Real Property Development
Poppy Manual

The Royal Canadian Legion - Mission and Vision

“To serve veterans, which includes currently serving military and RCMP members, and their families, to promote Remembrance and to serve our Communities and our Country.”
Our Vision Statement serves as a long-term and aspirational goal for the organization. It is: “Our vision is to be the most highly respected Veteran and Community Service organization.”
The Mission and Vision Statements go hand in hand and should always be used together.

Core Values

The core values that define Legionnaires are:

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Service

We provide dedicated support and compassionate assistance.

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Integrity

We behave ethically and in a manner which inspires trust, mutual understanding and confidence.

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Respect

We are supportive, inclusive, courteous and fair to all, honouring the dignity and worth of every person.

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Loyalty

We are steadfast in our patriotic allegiance to the Sovereign, to our Country, to The Royal Canadian Legion and to our Comrades.

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Teamwork

We cooperate and work together selflessly, in Comradeship, to achieve our shared Mission