



## Introduction to the Office of BRANCH PRESIDENT

On being elected President of your Branch, you have accepted what some consider as being the most difficult office in the Legion. It does not have to be.

Please remember that you are not alone; you can and should utilize the support of your fellow officers. Look to them for ideas; discuss with them matters of importance to your Branch and the Legion in general. The future of your Branch is in your hands. You have an opportunity to affect that future by making sure your Officers are well trained. Your Zone Leadership Development Chairman can help.

This Brochure is intended as an overview of your duties and responsibilities and will offer tips and ideas that will help to make your term as Branch President a successful one. Please take time to read and discuss this information with your Zone Commander whose experience and guidance will be of great value to you during your term of Office.

You have been elected by your fellow members to be the Chief Executive Officer of your Branch of The Royal Canadian Legion

At your Installation you gave a pledge to perform the duties of your Office to the best of your ability. Those duties are vast and cannot and should not be taken lightly. You must remember at all times to act in an unbiased and fair manner in the best interests of your Branch.

You also have pledged to preserve the spirit of fair play and comradeship at all times; to set an example of community service to your fellow comrades; to cooperate with your executive committee and the general membership of the Branch, always bearing in mind the purposes and objects of the Legion and the duty of all comrades towards those who need assistance.

As the Chief Executive Officer of the Legion Branch, the President exemplifies to the membership the fundamental qualities of leadership.

As its leader, the President has the ultimate responsibility for whatever happens and this function is and will remain that of directing the members.

As the Chief Administrator of the Branch, The President is its representative in the community and must show a combination of discretion, enterprise, integrity, responsibility, decisiveness, judgment and more.

It will be your duty to attend and preside at all regular and special meetings in addition to all executive meetings of the Branch. In most Branches - the President will also be the presiding Officer at all meetings. To help you with your Duties as meeting Chairman, please refer to the Legion manual “*Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings*” - this will guide you through the process and provide you with information on how to handle the various types of motions and rules of order. It is also very important to ensure that the Quorum for your Branch designated in your Branch Regulations, is met before the meeting is opened.

While performing as the meeting chairman you are reminded that impartiality and good control are expected at all times. Remember for many and particularly new members the proceedings of a meeting can be their first introduction to Legion business, programs and operations.

By now you have considered members for and may have appointed several committee chairmen including the Standing Committees. While this is a great opportunity to affect the future of these committees in your Branch, be sure to review with the Chairmen the responsibilities of their Committees and then allow them to determine the direction of their Committees. As President you are automatically an ex-officio member of all committees and can offer guidance if needed.

Special consideration and additional time must be spent on guiding new members of your Executive—their new ideas and unique ways should not be overlooked. You have the responsibility to teach future leaders during your term as President and help is available through the Leadership Development Chairmen at all levels.

#### **Your duties to your Zone:**

The bylaws are specific in that as President, you are a member of Zone Council and as such you are obligated to attend all Zone Council Meetings and Conventions. In your absence a Vice President will attend as your representative.

You must ensure that reports are filed by your Officers and Committee Chairmen to their respective Zone counterparts and on time. While attending a Zone Meeting it is your responsibility to represent the best interests of your Branch while keeping in mind the needs of your fellow Branches and the Legion in general.

You are also responsible for ensuring that the financial and other reports required for the Annual Branch Inspections are available on time.

#### **Your duties to your District:**

Unlike Zone, by virtue of your Office as Branch President you are not a member of District Council. You are however, expected to attend all District Conventions. As when attending Zone Conventions you should take full advantage of the opportunity to speak with other Branch Presidents and to share ideas and problems. While at a District Convention you may be called to attend a Presidents Meeting—this should not be used as an opportunity to criticize the Legion but as an opportunity to take part in discussions to offer solutions to any problems which will be recommended to District Council for review and action as appropriate

Use your time wisely and keep good notes.

## **Your Goal as Branch President:**

Ultimately you will determine your goals. Be careful not to set goals that are out of reach during your term of Office. Discuss your goals with the other Officers of your Branch - with their support, you have a better chance of accomplishing your goals

There will be times when you will be called upon to settle disputes. Your abilities as Leader will be tested to the limit at this time. Be sure to gather all the facts in any dispute and remain impartial. Take time to discuss the issues with the parties concerned before making a decision and utilize the experience of past Legion Officers in your Branch.

As President, you have a unique opportunity to influence the direction of your Branch. Personal goals must be set aside when and if they are not in the best interests of the Branch or the Legion as a whole. Use every tool at your disposal including the District Branch Advisory Committee which is there to give guidance on any matter concerning Legion. Be sure to contact your Zone Commander if you need help, that's why they are there!

**For more details of your duties and responsibilities as Branch President and those of your Officers and Members, please refer to one or more of the following manuals...**

- The General Bylaws (Dominion)
- Ontario Command Bylaws
- Your Branch Regulations
- The Legion Officers' Manual
- Ladies Auxiliary Bylaws
- Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings
- Ritual, Awards and Protocol Manual
- Membership Manuals
- Sports Guide
- Public Relations Manual
- Service Officers' Manual
- Chaplain's Manual
- Poppy Manual
- Legion Act to Incorporate
- Property & Development

Also refer to the Command websites often for the most current information.

**Dominion:** [www.legion.ca](http://www.legion.ca) and **Ontario:** [www.on.legion.ca](http://www.on.legion.ca)