



**ZONE COMMANDER'S  
HANDBOOK**

**June 2021**

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*WELCOME!* - and thank you for accepting the position of Zone Commander. You - along with your District Commander have the responsibility of assisting Ontario Command with the administration of The Royal Canadian Legion in your Zone.

As you know the title of any position in the Legion comes with many tasks to be performed. (See GBLO, Article VIII)

This handbook is designed as a reference to assist you with those tasks and points you to the various Legion Manuals available for the most up-to-date information. It is by no means all-inclusive and will be updated when needed. *Always use the current manuals as your principle guide.*

### **LEGEND:**

- **AGCO** Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario
- **BOT** Break Open Tickets
- **BOT** Board of Trustees
- **GBL** General By-Laws
- **GBLO** General By-Laws (Ontario Provincial Command)
- **GBLB** General By-Laws for Branches of the Ontario Provincial Command
  
- **NPO** Non-Profit Organization
- **OTF** Ontario Trillium Fund
- **PEC** Provincial Executive Council
- **PAC** Provincial Administrative Council
- **SEO** Senior Elected Officer

### **SOME MANUALS AVAILABLE**

The 5 main manuals that you should have in your possession at all times – *current edition*:

- General By-Laws
- General By-Laws of the Ontario Provincial Command
- Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings
- Ritual Protocol and Awards Manual
- Legion Officers' Manual

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

The Dominion Command and Ontario Command websites are a vast source of information, including forms and manuals at your fingertips. Because of the high cost of postal mail and the labour involved in processing it the Legion is rapidly transitioning towards electronic communications at all levels. Therefore, it is essential to have access to a computer. Share all information received with your Council and Branches.

Dominion Command website address is [www.legion.ca](http://www.legion.ca)

Ontario Command website address is [www.on.legion.ca](http://www.on.legion.ca)

## GOVERNANCE

### *Some basic information...*

The Legion was founded and incorporated under an act of parliament. The Secretary of State first awarded letters patent in 1926 under the companies act - and this in fact became our Charter but the Legion pushed to have the organization recognized and proclaimed with its own Act.

The Royal Canadian Legion is incorporated at the national level only: For purposes of opening new bank accounts, applying for grants or loans and other such services Branches are asked for Corporation information about our organization. Here is the information needed:

*Corporation Number* 058870-9

*Business Number (BN)* 107928798RC0001

*Corporate Name:* The Royal Canadian Legion.

*Governing Legislation:* Special Act of Parliament-1948-06-30. Legion Act 1990

*Registered Office Address*

86 Aird Place Ottawa ON K2L 0A1

The Branches and Provincial Commands are chartered by Dominion Command in accordance with the Act to Incorporate as per Chapter 84 of the Statutes of 1941 amended in 1981 and the General By-Laws of The Royal Canadian Legion. The Act also specifies that Branches are autonomous with respect to their affairs and have the power to make by-laws and regulations to govern their activities *provided they are consistent with the Act to Incorporate and the General By-Laws of Dominion and Ontario Commands.*

The Royal Canadian Legion and all **Branches** operate as non-profit organizations under the Income Tax Act (see Section 149 (1) (l) and the Legion Officers Manual for more information.

A **non-profit organization (NPO)** is a club, society, or association that's organized and operated solely for:

- social welfare
- civic improvement
- pleasure or recreation
- any other purpose except profit.

### **RESOLUTIONS – *how to prepare...***

Information is contained in the following publications:

GBLO - *Section 312 & 313*

GLB - *Sections 919 to 925*

Officers' Manual - Branch Section

Changes to our By-Laws can only be made through the proper use of the resolution process. It is a formal expression of an individual (or committee – Provincial/National) placed before a meeting (branch general meetings or conventions) for acceptance. Resolutions should only address one topic or issue.

The “Whereas” sections should contain accurate information, be concise to understand the rationale and kept to a minimum. The “Resolved” section should clearly state what action should be taken.

Zones and District *do not* have authority to make resolutions. Branches *do not* have to submit resolutions to Zones and Districts for approval, although *it is preferred in order to get additional membership support* at Conventions. Resolutions may proceed directly to Provincial Headquarters.

## **PETITIONS**

The use of petitions created to show a non-confidence vote within a branch, zone, district, and/or provincial command are meaningless. While they may serve to show dissatisfaction, they can not affect change. As stated above, only a resolution can do this.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **GENERAL DUTIES OF THE ZONE COMMANDER:**

The Zone Commander, as the Chief Executive Officer of the Zone, should be familiar with the GBL and GBLO. It shall be your responsibility to exercise a general supervision over all Branches within your Zone. Refer to ‘*General Responsibilities of a Zone Commander*’ Legion Officers Manual for more information. You are a member of the PEC and your District Council.

### **STARTING YOUR TERM BASICS:**

- Appoint a Zone Secretary and a Zone Treasurer (or Secretary/Treasurer)
- Appoint a Chair for each Zone Standing Committee
- Complete a Zone Profile of all Officers & Standing Committee Chair and send it to the District Commander & Provincial Headquarters, your Zone Council and Branches in your Zone. Branch Presidents within your Zone are members of Zone Council, as are District Officers and Chair of District Standing Committees being a member of a Branch within the Zone.
- Arrange to complete Zone Signing Authority at the Bank for all accounts.
- Schedule Zone Council Meetings and Conventions – dates and venues and confirm in writing to the District Commander and host Branches.
- Schedule an orientation/information meeting with your Zone Council at the beginning of the term to review with them their duties, policies and procedures related to the Zone.
- Forward copies of all Council and Convention Minutes to Provincial Headquarters for information purposes.

### **CHAIRING A MEETING:**

Always have handy the Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings for information and guidance on Chairing a meeting, responsibilities of members in attendance, rules and procedures for processing

motions. All Legion Officers and Branches should also have this manual. (Download/print from Dominion Command – *Branches/Command Resources – By-Laws and Branch Management*).

## **REPORTING:**

The Zone Commander is expected to attend District Council Meetings and District Conventions and will present a written report on activities within his Zone since the last District Convention Report. The Zone Commander should ensure he passes along the reporting procedures to the Deputy Zone Commander (or whomever the incoming Zone Commander may be) - For example, what type of information do the reports usually contain, does the Zone Commander read his report at the District Council Meeting and again on the Convention floor, or just at Council, or just at Convention etc. The Zone Commander should encourage branches to send delegates and observers to all conventions.

## **ZONE STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIR**

GBLO Section 807. (1) states the following Standing Committee Chair are appointed by the Zone Commander and these Zone Chair assist and advise their appropriate Branch Standing Committee Chair in their work and it is recommended they meet with the Branch Committee Chair in the Zone for information and training purposes, to organize training seminars and establish reporting requirements – at least once per year and always be available for questions and guidance. Zone Chair are encouraged to form a committee which can include the applicable Branch Chair and to ensure that information from District Chair are forwarded to the Branch.

- Legion Seniors Program
- Membership
- Poppy
- Public Relations
- Sports (elected or appointed)
- Track & Field
- Leadership Development
- Veterans Services
- Youth Education

## **PROVINCIAL CONVENTIONS AND PEC MEETINGS**

The Zone Commander is a full member of the P.E.C. and, as such, is encouraged and expected to take part in all decisions. Expenses are paid by Provincial Headquarters per the Expense Account Policy. The P.E.C. is held in November, usually the Saturday following November 11<sup>th</sup> each year. Following Saturday's meeting there is a reception/dinner. Dress is Business Attire. An escort is included in the invitation. There is usually a cost for the dinner to the Zone Commander (deducted from your per diem). You will be advised of the cost in advance. Sunday morning is usually a Zone Commanders' Meeting. You will be advised the location, time and dress (usually casual).

The Zone Commander holds a vote by virtue of his office at the Provincial Convention but cannot carry proxies if he attends as a P.E.C. delegate rather than as a Branch delegate (cannot be both).

Provincial Conventions are held every second year (odd number) usually commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in May.

## **DOMINION CONVENTIONS**

As a Zone Commander you do not hold a vote at Dominion Conventions by virtue of your office.

You could attend as a delegate of your own Branch and carry up to four (4) proxies or attend as a delegate of Ontario Command and carry zero (0) proxies.

You are expected to attend all Conventions and the P.E.C. meetings - to participate, to learn and to enjoy.

## **EXPENSE POLICY**

*The following is general information only, please refer to the Ontario Command Expense Account Policy for further information.*

The Expense Account Policy is an Ontario Command document established to determine expenses that will be compensated to various individuals in the performance of their duties as directed through their various responsibilities. The following procedures are to be followed regarding such expenses.

1. Expenses are to be submitted monthly and/or within **sixty (60) days** following the end of the month in which the expense is incurred; otherwise, they will not be honoured.
2. **All expenses incurred prior to May 31<sup>st</sup> in any year must be submitted to Provincial Headquarters for payment, no later than June 15<sup>th</sup> each year.**
3. There are only two expense account forms on the Ontario Command website at [www.on.legion.ca](http://www.on.legion.ca) under Member Resources. Submit only the **most current** forms.
4. **The Out of Pocket Expense Form** is used for claiming expenses. **The Per Diem Voucher** (Per Diem rate currently \$185.00 per day (\$115.00 for rooms and \$70.00 for meals)) is only used when sent out by Provincial Headquarters for specific meetings, Provincial and Dominion Conventions.
5. Both forms must record the date the form was completed, the date that the travel occurred, the Office that you hold with respect to that travel, the purpose of the travel, the kilometres travelled, etc. Receipts must be submitted for air, train, taxi or bus fares, accommodation, postage, (only when applicable) etc. Any claim submitted without the required information will be returned. Please note **all expense forms must be signed.**
6. The Ontario Command Expense Account Policy does not provide for the payment of expenses incurred by any Officer or Standing Committee Chair that **extends beyond the term of office.**
7. Any member of the District or Zone, or member of a Provincial Standing Committee residing outside of the District or Zone, will be permitted **mileage from their resident Branch** (not from one's place of residence) for travel within the District or Zone in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of their office.

8. If a **Per Diem Voucher** has been submitted for any meeting that **you were unable to attend**, all funds must be made payable to Ontario Command and returned to Provincial Headquarters within 14 days of said meeting.
9. Any expenses not covered in this policy will be the responsibility of the District, Zone or Individual.
10. All expenses must be submitted to Provincial Headquarters on the **Out of Pocket Expense Form** or **Per Diem Voucher**. Any District, Zone or individually fabricated form will be returned to the individual for resubmission on the proper form.
11. When in doubt – ask your Chain of Command before incurring any expenses.

## **SECTION B**

### **PER DIEM VOUCHER**

1. The Per Diem rate (currently \$185.00 per day), includes accommodation and meal costs, (\$115.00 for rooms and \$70.00 for meals) and is paid to all members of the Provincial Executive Council to attend PEC (held in November on the weekend following November 11<sup>th</sup>. When November 11<sup>th</sup> is close to or on the weekend, the PEC meeting moves to the following weekend), Provincial Standing Committee meetings, Provincial and Dominion Conventions.
2. Two days Per Diem is paid for attending all PEC events during the PEC weekend.
3. When hotel accommodations are not required, ***mileage and reasonable meal expenses may be paid. (alcohol or tips not included)***
4. Senior Elected Officers, PEC members, Standing Committee Chairs, and Committee members who reside 600 km or more (one way) may be permitted additional expenses (if required with prior approval by Provincial Headquarters). The additional expense shall be made on an **Out of Pocket Expense Form** accompanied by the hotel receipt and reasonable meal receipts (alcohol not included or tip). This clause does not apply to Provincial and Dominion Conventions.
5. In extenuating circumstances such as storms, freezing rain, etc., you may be reimbursed should a stop over be necessary and approved by Provincial Headquarters. This claim will be submitted on an **Out of Pocket Expense Form** accompanied by the hotel receipt and reasonable meal receipts **(alcohol or tips not included)**.
6. For Dominion and Provincial Conventions, PEC members may claim reasonable accommodation costs in excess of \$115.00 per day (hospitality suites excluded). All other expenses not covered under District/Deputy District, Zone Commander sections shall be at the cost of the District or Zone. The **Provincial** President reserves the right to put a ceiling on such additional cost.

## **SECTION C**

### **OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSE FORMS**

1. Mileage is at the Ontario Command rate of \$0.55 cents per kilometre. Local bus or taxi fare must include a receipt. Air, train, long distance bus travel must be approved by Provincial Headquarters in advance of travel.
2. If the Officer resides within 50 km, (one way) hotel accommodation may not be claimed other than, PAC meetings, Provincial and Dominion Conventions. Should extenuating circumstances

apply prior approval may be granted from Provincial Headquarters. Meal expenses must be reasonable. **(alcohol or tips not included) NOTE: Spouse's meal is not included.**

3. Senior Elected Officers, PEC members, Standing Committee Chairs, and Committee members who reside 600 km or more (one way) may be permitted additional expenses (if required and approved in advance by Provincial Headquarters). The additional expense shall be made on an **Out of Pocket Expense Form** accompanied by the hotel receipt. This clause does not apply to Provincial and Dominion Conventions.
4. As most documents are sent electronically, reasonable postage may be paid however this does not include the cost of an all-Branch mailing or wide distribution throughout the District or Zone.
5. As most documents are sent electronically, photocopying costs will be limited. The cost of multiple copies for attendees at a seminar or convention will be an expense to the District or Zone.

### **ZONE COMMANDER EXPENSES**

1. Zone Commanders are compensated for travel expenses in the pursuit of their duties and within the areas that are under their jurisdiction from point of residence. The only Officers authorized to represent a Zone Commander is the Deputy Zone Commander(s) respectively. Also see Section C.
2. May receive 5 days Per Diem plus registration to attend a Dominion Conventions.
3. May receive 4 ½ days Per Diem plus mileage and registration for a Provincial Convention.
4. Alternates are not permitted unless prior approval from Provincial Headquarters due to extenuating circumstances.
5. May claim expenses to attend seminars in their area. The subject/seminar may only be claimed once.
6. May claim a maximum of two (2) Zone Council meetings to be held annually in conjunction with Zone Conventions.
7. Is restricted to three (3) visits per year to any Branch within the Zone (One (1) visit - Annual Inspection, one (1) visit for elections or installations of Officers and One (1) additional visit for a social functions i.e., Branch Anniversaries, Honours and Awards, Legion Week, Remembrance Day Ceremonies and Banquets. The **Out of Pocket Expense Form** must be completed, signed and a copy of the original invitation attached. Provincial Headquarters may approve additional visits to a Branch if warranted.
8. May claim expenses to attend District Conventions and District Council Meetings.
9. Non-Legion functions will not be honoured unless prior permission has been granted from Provincial Headquarters.
10. Zone Commanders must obtain prior approval from Provincial Headquarters to accept an invitation to a Ladies Auxiliary function (one (1) LA function at Ontario Command expense during the term of office).
11. When a Dominion sporting event is hosted by a Branch in Ontario, all arrangements are the responsibility of Dominion Command. Any expense associated with a Zone Officer is an expense of the Zone. The Provincial President or designate will be the official representative of Ontario Command.
12. Expenses for Zone **Officers** are an expense to the Zone in question.

13. Zone **Officers** attending a meeting to plan and or organize a Zone Convention, *will be a Zone expense*. This responsibility lies with the Zone Commander.
14. Branch functions are the responsibility of the Branch and do not require a visit from a Zone Commander for organizational purposes.

## **SECTION G**

### **DEPUTY DISTRICT AND DEPUTY ZONE COMMANDERS' EXPENSES**

1. Deputy District Commanders may receive 5 days Per Diem, plus travel allowance and registration to attend a Dominion Convention.
2. Deputy District Commanders may receive 4 ½ days Per Diem plus mileage and registration fee to attend Provincial Conventions.
3. Deputy District Commanders are authorized to attend their own District Conventions and Council Meetings at Ontario Command expense.
4. The expenses of a **Deputy Commander** to attend a function that is also attended by the District/Zone Commander are an expense to the **District or Zone**.
5. Deputy Commanders are entitled to expenses from Ontario Command when **deputized** by their respective District or Zone Commanders. The District or Zone Commander must be unable to attend the function on that date. A Deputy District Commander or Deputy Zone Commander may be deputized to attend the following:
  - a) Branch Anniversary Celebrations commencing with the 10<sup>th</sup> year and at 5-year intervals thereafter.
  - b) Presentation of Branch Charters.
  - c) Official Opening Ceremonies of new Branch property.
  - d) Mortgage Burning Ceremonies.
  - e) Legion Week Celebrations.
  - f) Events of historical interest or local celebration in which the Legion Branch plays an integral part.
  - g) November 11<sup>th</sup> celebrations, parades, etc.
  - h) Zone Conventions or Zone Council Meetings.
  - i) In extenuating circumstances, **and subject to prior approval by Provincial Headquarters** a Deputy Zone Commander may attend a Dominion or Provincial Convention when the Zone Commander is unable. The Deputy would receive the same expenses as the Zone Commander.

Although prior approval from Provincial Headquarters will not be required a copy of the original invitation to the District/Zone Commander to attend the Branch function must be included with the completed **Out of Pocket Expense Form**, signed, and forwarded to your respective District or Zone Commander for verification and signature.

## **VISITATION POLICY**

The visitation Policy can be found in the Officers' Manual.

### **Proper Reception of a Provincial Command Officer**

Information regarding proper protocol can be found in the Officers' Manual, Protocol Section and in the Ritual, Awards and Protocol Manual.

Should you wish the attendance of a Command Officer at a function, Visitation forms can be obtained from the Ontario Provincial Command website under Committee forms and must be completed and sent to your District Commander for his approval.

### **Visits by a District Commander**

In some situations, you may want to invite the District Commander to a Zone function; or a Branch may ask you about the proper procedure of inviting a District Commander to a Branch function.

The Officers' Manual deals with visits by a District Commander, for example, visiting each Zone at least once per year and attending Zone Drumhead Services. It is best, however, to simply ask your District Commander how he would like the invitation extended. He will know what is and isn't allowed; who pays his expenses, etc., and if the Visitation Request Form is required.

## **MANUALS NEEDED BY ALL BRANCHES - CURRENT EDITIONS**

General By-Laws of The Royal Canadian Legion	Dominion Command
General By-Laws of Ontario Provincial Command	Provincial Command
General By-Laws Ladies' Auxiliary, Ontario Provincial Command	Provincial Command
Officers' Manual	Provincial Command
Act to Incorporate	Dominion Command
Ritual, Awards and Protocol Manual	Dominion Command
Rules of Procedure Legion Meetings	Dominion Command
Branch Leadership Manual (for historical purposes only)	Dominion Command
Membership Guides	Dominion Command
Sports Guide – (Dominion)	Dominion Command
Sports Guide – (Provincial)	Provincial Command
Poppy Manual	Dominion Command
Public Relations Manual	Dominion Command
Service Officers Handbook	Dominion Command
Real Property Development Handbook	Dominion Command
Chaplain's Manual	Dominion Command

Some manuals are available in printed form from Provincial Headquarters at a reasonable cost.

## **DISTRICT BRANCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The District Branch Advisory Committee provides financial and administrative assistance, training and guidance to branches in the District who are experiencing financial/administrative problems that the

branch officers may not have recognized or cannot resolve on their own as per the GBLO Section 503 (3). The Zone Commander and Deputy Zone Commander are members of this committee for their Zone.

## **HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS**

Full instructions and information on the Legion's Complaint Procedure can be found in the GBL Article III and the Legion Officers Manual provides additional details. The Zone Commander does not get involved with complaints against branch members, unless he is instructed by Provincial Headquarters. A Zone Chaplain is an obvious choice to handle the mediation process. It is a good idea to appoint a team of members within the Zone in preparation to handle complaint hearings should it become necessary rather than wait weeks and struggle to find members for this task. Past Zone Commanders might be good candidates. Training should be given on the hearing process.

The Zone Commander should ensure that all Branch Presidents and Secretaries are familiar with the complaint procedure should a complaint be received.

Complaints against a Ladies' Auxiliary member may only be lodged by another Ladies' Auxiliary member and the provisions of GBL Article III shall apply in respect of procedures.

Complaints against a Zone Officer are processed directly with Provincial Headquarters.

## **NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

Read the "Guide to Nomination and Election of Branch Officers" section in the Officer's Manual for more in-depth information.

If you are asked to conduct Branch elections, you must make sure you have at least two scrutineers. The scrutineers must be people who will not vote in the election - a good idea is to have members from another Legion Branch. Of course, all scrutineers are reminded that the number of ballots cast for each candidate is secret and results must not be divulged to anyone other than the election Chair. Always have a current copy of the Branch Regulations available for the Election Meeting.

Installation of Officers Information can be found in the Officers Manual and the Ritual Protocol and Awards Manual.

## **PROCEDURE FOR SURRENDER OF A CHARTER BY A BRANCH OR A LADIES' AUXILIARY TO A BRANCH**

Should the unthinkable happen after all other options have been considered, you may be asked to assist the Branch with the proper procedure which can be found in the Legion Officers Manual.

## **PROPERTY COMMITTEE ONTARIO COMMAND**

Information regarding borrowing, mortgaging, selling and/or leasing of property and branch construction can be found in the Legion Officers Manual. NOTE: Lines of credit represent potential borrowing by a branch and are subject to the same procedure as other borrowing. This includes a review by Ontario Command. Please ensure that the lines of credit follow the same procedure as required for all other borrowing and the documentation noted in the Procedure, apply for lines of credit.

The establishment of the property committee was done to ensure that the branch is proceeding on the basis of sound financial rationale and with the necessary expertise. The Property Committee may recommend the assistance/intervention of the Branch Advisory Committee where indicated, before proceeding further.

### **ANNUAL BRANCH INSPECTIONS**

You are expected to visit all Branches within your Zone annually and to complete the Annual Branch Inspection Form following your visit. This form must be submitted to your District Commander in a timely manner.

#### ***Preparing for the Annual visit — you should:***

1. Advise the Branch in writing the date you desire to attend at least one month in advance.
2. List in your letter those items that you are requesting to inspect, and the number of copies needed of each item (see suggested checklist under Forms)
3. Also advise the Branch of the time, prior to meeting, that you wish to meet with the Branch Executive in order to review and inspect the items requested.
4. Prior to visit make sure to have a copy of the Branch's Regulations.
5. Prior to visit review the last Zone Commander Inspection Report and any follow-up information - note any unfinished items or any that need special attention for further review at the next visit.

All of the requested annual accounts are required by By-Law, to be reviewed with a Certificate of Compliance and a copy of the Financial Review Committee Report (copy near end of booklet) which is presented to the Branch Executive by 29 August (90 days after year end), then presented to the next General Meeting for approval. (see GBLB Article XII)

We do NOT REQUIRE you to collect copies of the Poppy Trust Fund financial statements nor copies of the Ladies Auxiliary Financial Statements, nor do we require detailed itemized transaction reports, trial balances etc. from the General Ledger or Lottery Trust Account.

Complete the Branch Inspection report online according to latest procedures - after you have had time to review all of the submitted reports. After signing, email a copy to your District Commander along with the required statements and information copies and keep one copy for the Zone file. These items are marked on the form with an asterisk. Pay attention to deadlines.

**During your visit - monitor that:**

- The Branch Officers are in uniform (Ritual and Insignia Manual)
- The full opening and closing ceremonies are conducted properly (R & I Manual)
- Meetings are held in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings
- All correspondence is read, in particular any correspondence from Dominion and Provincial Headquarters.
- Membership applications are presented to the General Meeting for Approval
- New Members are properly initiated according to the Ritual and Insignia Manual
- Adequate financial statements are presented to the General membership for approval for all accounts.
- All correspondence from the Branch is initiated through the Secretary
- That the Branch Profile is up to date and notified to Zone Secretary promptly any changes
- Address Profiles for the Zone and District are up to date & distributed to the Executive.
- Take a walk around the Branch to check the physical condition of the facilities.

After your inspection visit is completed, you should not linger at the Branch too long. Often Branch Members may want to corner you with their own personal internal problems and complaints which may already be handled by the Branch President and you do not want to overstep or interfere in his authority in such matters. If this occurs, encourage the member to take the matter up with the President.

*It is wise to check with the Branch President by phone the day before your visit to make sure the Branch is ready for your visit. You would not want to waste a trip which has happened more than once.*

**WHEN DOES A BRANCH NEED ASSISTANCE? (formerly known as ‘red-flagged’)**

Here are some of the major reasons or combination thereof why a Legion Branch can be flagged for further review and assistance in the best interests of helping Branch become safe and sound financially, administratively and in compliance with Legion policies and procedures. Not in order of importance....

- Non-compliant financial reporting
- Not providing the required financial reports at time of Zone Commander’s Inspection and/or refusing to provide financial statements or other documentation as required for review.
- Financial statements showing financial losses, especially repeated year after year
- Co-mingled financial reporting.
- Non-compliant Lottery activities and reporting.
- Financial statements not reviewed or audited in compliance with by-laws including no Financial Review Committee written report of findings.

- Financial Statements with no certificate of compliance
- Not following by-laws and/or branch regulations
- Not completing Special Use Forms as required for poppy fund expenditures

## **FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

### **ZONE FINANCE POLICY – ONTARIO COMMAND**

**The following Finance Policy will apply to all Zones within Ontario Command...**

1. All monies shall be deposited to a Canadian Banking Institution that is federally licensed in the name of the Zone
2. The signing authorities for all Zone bank accounts shall be the Zone Commander, Deputy Zone Commander(s), Treasurer, Secretary and/or Secretary/Treasurer.
3. Two signatures are required on all cheques and at no time shall a blank cheque be signed.
4. A complete written financial statement of all Zone accounts must be made at all Zone Council and Zone Conventions.
5. All invoices, expense accounts and donations must be paid by cheque
6. A complete Zone financial review/audited statement must be presented to the Fall Convention or Council following the end of each fiscal year or no later than the end of October of the applicable calendar year. The statements would then appear in the council minutes at the Spring Convention
7. A copy of the complete financial review/audited statement of all accounts including Sports - for the end of each fiscal year must be sent through the District Commander to Provincial Headquarters on or before 31 October of each calendar year and must include a list of all investments (see note below)
8. All excess Sports Funds must be returned to the Zone General Fund at the end of each term of office. It is noted that a Zone may establish and retain an amount at the beginning of each term that may be held by the Zone Sports Officer.
9. Zones are responsible to submit any reports required by the federal or provincial government related to their finances.
10. Zone Commanders are responsible to ensure that all Branches submit financial reports to the District Commander and Provincial Headquarters within the specified time period.
11. All investments must be in the name of a Zone and not individual members
12. Funds can be invested in but not limited to the following: Guaranteed Investment Certificates, Bankers' Acceptance, Treasury Bills, government of Canada Bonds.
13. All Investments, including renewals, must be approved at a meeting of the Zone Council.

NOTE: The complete review/audited statement (item 7) must include the following accounts, General, Sports, Bursary, Disaster Relief, Track & Field, Veterans Comfort Fund, Youth Sports, Lottery, Hospital Fund and any other funds not listed.

A copy of the Certificate of Compliance and Financial Review Report for Zone is found under the FORMS section of this handbook.

## **LEGION BRANCH BANK ACCOUNTS**

### **General Operating Account: (for the general business of the Branch.)**

- Bank Account with cheque writing ability, as approved by the Branch.
- Fiscal year: 01 June to 31 May with audited/reviewed Financial Statement to be presented to the Membership 90 days after the fiscal year end: *GBLO Section 922 (3)*
- Financial Statements for this account do not include the Lottery Trust, Poppy Trust, or Ladies' Auxiliary Accounts.
- All cheques to be pre-numbered and signed by two persons who are authorized according to the by-laws.

### **Lottery Trust Account: (for revenue and expenses for the Lottery Trust Fund from Break Open Tickets, Bingo, Blanket License for raffles and draws and other similar authorized/licensed lotteries.)**

- Separate Bank account with cheque writing ability, as approved by the Branch
- Fiscal year: 01 June to 31 May with a certified audited/reviewed Financial Statement separate to the General Account, to be presented to the Membership 90 days after the fiscal year end *GBLO Section 922 (3)*
- Funds in this account are not a Branch Asset except for allowable expenses which are to be paid from the Lottery Account to the Building Maintenance Account by cheque.
- All cheques to be pre-numbered and signed by two persons who are authorized according to the by-laws.

### **Poppy Trust Account: (for revenue and expenses for the Poppy Trust Fund.)**

- Rules of administration according to the Poppy Manual
- Separate Bank Account with cheque writing ability, as approved by the Branch
- Fiscal year: 01 October to 30 September with a certified audited/reviewed Financial Statement to be submitted to Provincial Headquarters by 31 October. The Financial Statement must be published to the public, annually, prior to the next campaign beginning. (*Poppy Manual Section 606*)
- Funds in this account are not a Branch Asset. These are public funds administered by the Branch Poppy Trust Committee and are reported separately.
- All cheques to be pre-numbered and signed by two persons who are authorized, one of whom must be The Poppy Trust Fund Chair. *GBLO Section 920*

***Any other accounts within the General Account or separate Trust Accounts as approved by the Branch General Meeting to follow the same financial reporting principles.***

## **WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN BRANCH FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

- Is there a negative bank balance, if so how does this compare to the previous year?
- Is there a net income at the end of the fiscal year – or a loss?
- If there is a loss, how does this compare with the previous and historical years (check the file)

- Ask for reasons why there is a net loss and what corrective action is being planned
- Make sure to get a copy of the current financial statements at time of visit, perhaps a negative situation has been corrected.
- What percentage is payroll expense to net income? Payroll includes benefits and contracted services such as janitor and bookkeeping.

### General Operating Account - Statement of Profit and Loss

You need to see Balance Sheet and P&L from books of original entry with previous year comparison. The computer can produce this report which is what is required.

Is a summary of all monies collected and paid out during the period provided to the General Meeting by the Treasurer? See sample Standard Treasurer Report Form – under FORMS

Depreciation - Furniture and equipment depreciation is not required.

Replacement of furniture and equipment that has worn out or broken is a normal part of the functioning of a Legion Branch – but the accounting for those costs has become inconsistent and confusing for members and The Royal Canadian Legion. As Branches are not-for-profit organizations and as such do not file income tax returns or report earnings to the Canada Revenue Agency - the income tax act is not a relevant guideline. Branches are required however to report their transactions to both their membership and The Royal Canadian Legion. It was decided that this is the time to standardize the reporting of furniture and equipment purchases and as such all furniture and equipment purchases should be reported as an operating expense in the year that the purchase occurs. This change will provide the membership with clearer reporting of the true cost transactions that have occurred and will enable the Legion to consistently assess operating results.

### **Consolidated Statements are not acceptable**

#### Lottery Accounting

The Legion operates its lottery activities for draws, raffles, break open tickets and bingos under the direction of the AGCO not the Ontario Lottery & Gaming!

Upon approval of the local municipality, Branches may be allowed an Eligible Use percentage of the NET proceeds of each Lottery Licence. The Eligible Use proceeds are to be deposited into a Building Maintenance Account - instructions are contained in Chapter 2 of the AGCO Policy Manual.

2.7.4(f)(ii)(1) Eligible uses of lottery proceeds which says The Legion may use up to two (2) per cent of the net lottery proceeds to pay the general operating expenses of these premises. The licensing authority may increase the maximum allowable expenses for maintenance if the organization can prove the need for the funds and show that the facility is offered free of charge to charitable organizations more than two (2) per cent of the time. The licensing authority could increase the maximum allowable amount to a percentage proportional to the time the facility is used free of charge for eligible charitable purposes. The maintenance costs may include:

- municipal taxes;
- utilities;
- liability insurance on the building; and
- cleaning and general maintenance.

Please note that the two per cent of net proceeds allowed for general maintenance is in addition to the percentage of gross receipts a licensee is permitted to retain from the licensed lottery events in order to cover the costs of conducting and managing the event. Ask to see this in writing from the municipality.

## **HANDLING OF TRILLIUM OR OTHER GRANTS IN THE BRANCH ACCOUNTING SYSTEM**

A Trillium or any other type of Grant is not to be considered Branch General Operating Account income. A Grant is for a specific purpose and the management of the Grant received is specifically under the direction of the Ontario Trillium Foundation or other Grant provider.

Ideally, when a Grant is received, a bank account will be opened for that specific purpose – to manage the expenses and specific reporting to the OTF or Grant provider. These Grants may be subjected to an Audit, therefore it is essential to keep these financial transactions and complete documentation separate from the General Operating Account of the Legion Branch.

Deposit the money into the new account and show it as an asset on the balance sheet. Any project expenses are paid directly out of the new account and recorded in a separate ledger with its own Financial Statements of income & expense. The following must be observed that...

1. This money is not getting mixed with the operating funds.
2. These funds can only be spent on the purpose of the grant
3. When the project is finished it is much easier for the branch to perform a Project End financial report for the members as well as to the organization that provided the grant.
4. Many times a project will overlap the legion fiscal year and a separate statement can be provided for this account
5. By keeping it separate you are not inflating the Operations of the General Account.
6. Also for the smaller branches which may not be bookkeeping literate this would be much simpler.

Knowing and understanding the tremendous fees charged by the Banks, a separate bank account may not be desirable and **provided** the Treasurer has sufficient skills to manage the Grant and the executive is accountable for the fund in its entirety - the branch must set up income and expense accounts within the General Ledger called Grants Income or something similar as a main (header) account and then enter sub accounts like Trillium etc. and the grant is deposited in the bank along with all the other income entered and then the bills are paid out and recorded as an expense. The Grant funds are NOT to be spent for any other purposes than what the Grant was intended for and must be noted in all financial reporting so as not to inflate the appearance of Branch operating finances.

Be aware that a Trillium or other Grant Project may overlap the Legion fiscal year and the Legion Election Term – so a policy must be in place to ensure that both the outgoing and incoming Executives understand and are committed to the required management of the Fund. A separate bank account will make this whole process much easier to manage.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ONTARIO PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS:

**The Royal Canadian Legion**

**89 Industrial Parkway N.**

**Aurora, Ontario L4G 4C4**

Phone: 905-841-7999

Toll-free: 888-207-0939

Fax: 905-841-9992

[www.on.legion.ca](http://www.on.legion.ca)

[rlontariocommand@on.legion.ca](mailto:rlontariocommand@on.legion.ca)

Executive Director: Pamela Sweeny

Assistant Executive Director: Juanita Kemp

### SENIOR ELECTED OFFICERS:

**President**

**Immediate Past President**

**First Vice-President**

**Vice-President**

**Vice-President**

**Vice-President**

**Chair**

**Vice Chair**

**Honourary Treasurer**

**Garry Pond**

**Sharon McKeown**

**Derek Moore**

**Brian Harris**

**Lynn McClellan**

**Pam Davidson**

**Ron Goebel**

**Ron Crown**

**Terry Jacobs**

Legion members are reminded that any communication of Legion business should be through the established Chain of Command. Individual members should communicate to Provincial Headquarters through their Branch, Branches through their respective Zone Commanders and Zone Commanders through their respective District Commanders. Members of Provincial Committees should direct their inquiries to their respective Provincial Committee Chair.

## Insurance Coverage

Provincial Headquarters has policies to cover the following:

- General Liability - for general claims against the Zone, District or Provincial Command.
- Directors' and Officers' Liability – covers all PEC positions, Deputy Zone Commanders and all other elected and appointed officers at the Provincial, Zone and District level.
- Travel Insurance for death and dismemberment - limited coverage for death and dismemberment in accordance with the policy for the following members:

PEC, CF Directors, Members serving on Boards of Management or Branch Advisory teams, all elected and appointed officers at Provincial, District and Zone levels.

- Dishonesty policy - covers the following positions: Signing officers of Provincial Headquarters, District Commander, Deputy District Commander, District Treasurer, District Sports Officer, Zone Commander, Deputy Zone Commander, Zone Treasurer, and Zone Sports Officer.

Claims must be reported immediately to Provincial Headquarters and coverage is only to the extent of the provisions of the insurance policy applicable. In accordance with the Act to Incorporate, branches are autonomous with respect to their operations and are not covered by the insurance policies purchased by Ontario Command.

Zone Commanders should be aware that a volunteer at any of the branches in the Zone that does NOT have “volunteer” coverage as an “extra” is putting their volunteers at risk such as when someone who is not on the executive but helps out at the meat draw and breaks their arm. A cadet that goes poppy tagging is not covered unless they have the “extra”. A volunteer bartender is not covered, etc. Most people believe everyone at the branch whether executive member or volunteer member is covered.

Party Alcohol Liability insurance (PAL) is another “extra” that we suggest is added as an option to any hall rental contract. It is about \$75 for the “event”. If a couple is having a “stag and doe” at the branch and have rented the upper hall, people are not only suing the Legion Branch if someone leaving the stag and doe gets into an accident, or slips and falls on the stairs or in the parking lot....they are also suing the “hosts” of the function. Whether it’s a private party, wedding, Jack & Jill, birthday celebration.

## **FORMS**

**The following forms are printable for your use:**

Certificate of Compliance (ZONE)

Sample Branch Treasurer Summary Report

Submission Checklist for Zone Visitation

Financial Review Certificate

## CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE (ZONE ACCOUNTS)

We, the undersigned Financial Review Committee, appointed by the Zone on \_\_\_\_\_ to conduct an annual Review of the Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Account, do hereby attest and declare that we have completed the Financial Review in accordance with the guidelines and that we have conducted sufficient tests of those accounting records which are susceptible to testing to satisfy ourselves that the financial statement for the period 01 June \_\_\_\_\_ to 31 May \_\_\_\_\_ present fairly and reasonably the financial position of the **Zone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Account**.

Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments by Review Committee:

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Approved at the Zone Convention held: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: Zone Commander \_\_\_\_\_

## SAMPLE BRANCH TREASURER MONTHLY FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch \_\_\_\_\_

TREASURER'S SUMMARY REPORT MONTH OF \_\_\_\_\_

### GENERAL OPERATING ACCOUNT SUMMARY:

OPENING BANK BALANCE as at \_\_\_\_\_ \$

TOTAL INCOME for the month \$

TOTAL EXPENSES for the month \$

NET INCOME (LOSS) for the month \$

CLOSING BANK BALANCE as at \_\_\_\_\_ \$

UNCASHED CHEQUES at month end \$

UNDEPOSITED FUNDS at month end \$

NET INCOME (LOSS) YEAR TO DATE JUNE-\_\_\_\_\_ \$

SAVINGS ACCOUNT BALANCE \$

GIC AND OTHER INVESTMENTS \$

OTHER ACCOUNT BALANCE \_\_\_\_\_ \$

BUILDING MAINTENANCE ACCOUNT BALANCE \$

### LOTTERY TRUST ACCOUNT SUMMARY AS AT

RAFFLES (BLANKET LICENSE) ACCOUNT BALANCE \$

B.O.T. ACCOUNT BALANCE \$

BINGO ACCOUNT BALANCE \$

Respectfully submitted, Treasurer

## **SUBMISSION CHECK LIST 2021**

### **ANNUAL ZONE COMMANDER'S BRANCH INSPECTION**

**Each Branch is required to present one set of the following reports to your Zone Commander, at his/her annual visit to your branch**

- 1 copy of your Reviewed Financial Statement for your **Branch General Operating Account Balance Sheet & Profit and Loss Statement** for the year ending 31 May 2019 **with previous year comparison and Financial Review Committee Certification.**
  
- 1 copy of your Reviewed Financial Statement for all of your **Lottery Trust Accounts, Balance Sheet & Profit and Loss Statement** for the year ending 31 May 2019 **with previous year comparison and Financial Review Committee Certification.**
  
- 1 copy of your Reviewed Financial Statement for **any other authorized Bank Account** held by your Branch, Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Statement for the year ending 31 May 2019 **with previous year comparison and Financial Review Committee Certification.**

**All of the above Annual Financial Statements with a signed Financial Review Certificate must be presented to the Branch Executive within 90 days of year end (by 29 August) and then presented to your next General Meeting for approval. Consolidated or comingled Statements are not acceptable**

- 1 copy of your **CURRENT** year-to-date Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement for your General Operating Account.
  
- 1 copy of your property Insurance Policy Schedule of Coverages **ONLY**
  
- 1 copy of each – HST, WSIB and Source Deductions

**ZONE COMMANDER:** The completed Zone Commander Annual Branch Inspection Report form plus the above reports, comprises one complete report set for each Branch. Email each set to your District Commander *within one week of your Inspection visit.*

*If the Zone Commander recommends assistance is required – email one set directly to Jen LeClair at Provincial Headquarters and cc your District Commander. The Branch is to be notified immediately by the Zone Commander that the Branch flagged for assistance and for what reasons also email 1 copy to your District Commander.*

**DISTRICT COMMANDER:** Email your completed Branch Inspection Report set for each Branch to Provincial Headquarters – and – cc your District BA Chair

# FINANCIAL REVIEW CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned appointed by the membership, of Branch \_\_\_\_\_ at the General Meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_ (d/m/y) to conduct the Annual Financial Review of the Branch, do hereby attest and declare that the completed financial review has been done in accordance with the guidelines and that we have conducted sufficient tests of those accounting records susceptible to testing to satisfy ourselves that the financial statements for the period from June 1, \_\_\_\_\_ to May 31, \_\_\_\_\_ present fairly and reasonably the financial position of the Branch. The Year End Financial Statement is attached for submission.

ACCOUNT REVIEWED \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
day month year

COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS: (continue on separate page if necessary)

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Branch Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
day month year

## Financial Review Committee:

Please print name on top line, and sign below

Chair Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (with answers)**

### **1. Question**

What may disqualify a member from running for elective office at Branch level?

**Answer** - If he is not a voting member or if he is not in good standing.

### **2. Question**

Are there any restrictions a Branch may impose upon those running for elective office at Branch level?

**Answer** – Yes, refer to GBLO Section 403 and GBLO Section 404 (a) The By-Laws for Branches contains restrictions on election to President or Vice-President Offices - GBLO Section 403 and on election to the Executive Committee - GBLO Section 404 (a)

### **3. Question**

May a paid employee of the Legion run for elective office and resign his paid employment if elected?

**Answer** – Yes, GBLO Section 909 (3)

### **4. Question**

How many levels of corporate structure are in the Royal Canadian Legion?

**Answer** - There are three (3) levels - Branch, Provincial Command and Dominion Command as created by the Act to Incorporate.

Note: Zones and Districts are administrative arms of Provincial Command.

### **5. Question**

May a member hold more than one elected office in The Royal Canadian Legion?

**Answer** - Yes. A member may, if qualified, hold one elective office at each level of Command in The Royal Canadian Legion.

### **6. Question**

Does a member holding elective office have to resign that office to run for a higher office?

**Answer** – No, however, a member may hold only one elective office at each level of the Legion

### **7. Question**

Can a Branch prevent a female member from holding elective office in the Branch and the Ladies' Auxiliary simultaneously?

**Answer** - A Branch may not prevent a member of the Ladies' Auxiliary from running for elective office if qualified (see answer to Question 2) – except for the office of President. GBLO Section 906 (6) states “No member shall simultaneously hold the positions of Branch President and President of the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Branch.”

### **8. Question**

Can a member who is suspended from the Branch run for office while under suspension?

**Answer** - No. A member under suspension is a member who is not in good standing for any purpose.

**9. Question**

Can a member run for office when deprived of Clubroom Privileges?

**Answer** - Yes.

**10. Question**

Can a Branch limit the consecutive terms of office that a member can hold any elective office?

**Answer** - No.

**11. Question**

Can a Branch limit the types of membership that hold office or sit on Committees, i.e., Ordinary, Life, Associate, Affiliate Voting?

**Answer** - No. Branches may not discriminate among voting members.

**12. Question**

When the By-laws state “any Branch Officer or Executive member absent from three consecutive meetings without approval shall cease to hold office”, does this apply to the Immediate Past President?

**Answer** - Yes. The GBLB Section 509 (2) states” Should the Immediate Past President be absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of either the Executive Committee or the Branch, or a combination of both, without due cause satisfactory to the Executive Committee, he shall cease to hold office.

**13. Question**

Are female members who Chair meetings or committees referred to as “Chairpersons”?

**Answer** - No. The member holding such office is addressed as Comrade Chair regardless of the member’s sex. They are also never addressed as Comrade Chairlady or Comrade Chairwoman. Those in the Ladies’ Auxiliary are addressed as Madam Chair.

**14. Question**

Can an Executive Committee member be removed from office by a vote of “no confidence”?

**Answer** – No. *Elected* Officers or *Elected* Executive Committee Members who fail to perform their duties to the best of their abilities should be so charged under GBL Article III. Members *appointed* to the Executive Committee, such as a Standing Committee Chair may however, be removed from his position without using Article III if he fails to perform to the best of his ability - with approval of the Executive Committee.

**15. Question**

Can a widow, child, etc., of a deceased veteran wear his medals?

**Answer** - No. Section 377 of the Criminal Code of Canada states it is unlawful.

**16. Question**

Can a Notice of Motion be amended?

**Answer** - Not at the meeting at which it is first presented. Yes - at the subsequent meeting at which the Motion is to be considered, the amendment must be relevant to the subject to be amended. **Note:** Although the Notice of Motion may require a two-thirds majority for

approval, amendments to such Motions only require a majority for approval.

**17. Question**

How is a Notice of Motion presented?

**Answer** - When a Notice of Motion is presented to a General Meeting, the member presenting it shall state: “At the next General Meeting (**state month**), I shall move or cause to move the following Motion”. The Motion shall then be read out in its entirety and signed by the member presenting it and is not open to discussion until the next meeting. It should then be posted on the Branch bulletin board for information of all Branch members. (**Exception - Notice of Motion re: mortgaging, leasing, or selling of property must be sent by mail at least 10 days prior to meeting at which the issue will be discussed**).

**18. Question**

Can a Notice of Motion be dealt with if the mover of the Motion is not in attendance at the meeting at which it is to be considered?

**Answer** - Yes. Another member may move its adoption, (cause to move).

**19. Question**

Can the members who move and second a Motion speak against the Motion or vote against it?

**Answer** - The mover of the Motion may vote against it but may not speak against it. The seconder of the Motion may speak *and* vote against it.

**20. Question**

Can Branch members employed by the Branch be Branch delegates to Zone, District, Provincial Command or Dominion Command Conventions?

**Answer** - Yes. Branch members who are employees of the Branch may be Branch delegates.

**21. Question**

May paid employees of the Legion receive Honours and Awards at the level at which they are employed?

**Answer** - Yes, provided that the award is for service rendered other than for duty as a paid employee.

**22. Question**

How many members are required to form a Ladies' Auxiliary to a Branch?

**Answer** – As per the Ladies' Auxiliary By-Laws Article II, Section 212 (1) twenty (20) or more are required. The Ladies' Auxiliary of Ontario Command may request the surrender of the Charter when the Auxiliary fails to maintain sufficient membership as per the Ladies' Auxiliary By-Laws of Ontario Command, Article II Section 213.

**23. Question**

Is it in order for a nominating committee to submit two names for the same office?

**Answer** - Yes.