

THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

POLITICAL CODE OF ETHICS

Adopted at the 13th Annual Convention

Amended at the Forty-First Annual Convention
July, 1959

Amended by the Department Executive Committee
March 21, 1965

Amended by the Department Executive Committee
June 26, 1977

In order that World War Veterans who affiliate themselves with our great American Legion may actively participate in Governmental Affairs, local, state and national, without involving our organization in partisan politics, we do hereby adopt the following as our 'Political Code of Ethics.'

Section 1. The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.

Section 2. It is the privilege, duty and responsibility of all American citizens to actively participate in governmental affairs and the election of public officials at local, state and national levels. In order that all elected officers of The American Legion may properly exercise their prerogative in these matters.

Section 3. No elected officer, any salaried appointive officer or employee of The American Legion, District, Department or Post level, shall use the name of their office, past or present, or the fact that they are connected in any way with The American Legion by publicly supporting any candidate seeking public office. If such individual violates this provision the following action shall be taken:

- (a) In the event any person violates this provision as an elected officer of a Post, District or Department, a vacancy shall be declared.

- (b) If such person violating this provision is an elected officer of a Post, District or the Department, the vacancy will be filled in the manner outlined in:

Article VI, Section 2, of the Department Constitution for Department Officers.

Article VIII, Section 12, of the Department Constitution for District Officers.

Article IX of the Department Constitution for Post Officers.

- (c) Persons who are salaried employees of a Post, District or Department violating any of the provisions of this code, shall immediately be discharged from their Legion employment by their supervisor and/or by the Department Commander.
- (d) In the event they do not cease and desist from such activity the Department Executive Committee may proceed legally to recover damages for any harm and embarrassment which shall have accrued from the actions of such an individual.

Section 4. It shall be improper for Legionnaires speaking in a political campaign to use their Legion title, or to express their connection with the Legion, other than their membership therein, in printed announcements of political meetings.

Section 5. It shall be improper for a member of The American Legion, while campaigning for any candidate for public office, to urge members of The American Legion as such, to vote for or support any candidate.

Section 6. Legion publications of the Department or of smaller groups may accept for publication political announcements provided said announcements contain nothing therein provided as an appeal to Legionnaires, as such, for their support of the candidate; providing further, that said announcements shall be labeled at the top and at the bottom thereof as "A Paid Political Advertisement;" provided further, that said advertisement shall only be received as regular political advertisements and not assume the form of reading matter or news item.

Section 7. Candidates for political office, or anyone on their behalf, will not be allowed to speak at fairs or celebrations or gatherings of such a nature held under the auspices of The American Legion, unless all other candidates for the same office are accorded the same privilege.

With this expression by our organization relative to participation by its members, in purely political affairs, our position should be clear. If our organization is to maintain the high position it has won for itself, universally, it must avoid partisan politics. Notwithstanding, it should always impress upon its members that it considers it one of their principal duties to manifest a constant, spirited interest in the affairs of Government, exercising their every influence, by their participation in politics, to the end that honest, upright and fearless leaders, in whom the destiny of our Government rests, may be chosen to fill the position of honor and trust provided under our laws and our Constitution.

Section 8. The purposes of interpretation for a remunerative office shall be one in which the holder of said office receives compensation other than travel and per diem.