

What Happens During a Meeting

This is a brief explanation of what goes on at an American Legion Tri-Lakes Post 9-11 meeting, particularly to help our newer members become more comfortable with our rituals, what is considered our uniform, etc.

MEETING FORMAT

The Commander follows the opening ceremony, which includes posting the colors, the Chaplain's opening prayer, reciting both the Pledge of Allegiance and the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution, and the posting of the POW/MIA flag. Then the Adjutant calls the roll of officers and announces whether there is a Quorum for the meeting to conduct business and then reads the minutes. The Commander asks for corrections and declares the minutes approved as read or as corrected.

The Commander then introduces guests and visiting dignitaries and proceeds to Committee reports. Next on the agenda is balloting on proposed new members, sick call / relief / employment reports, Service Officer's reports, unfinished business, initiation of candidates, new business / correspondence, (draping of the colors and memorial prayer if a member has died), good of the Legion (where anyone can bring up any subject except religion or partisan politics), and the closing ceremony which includes the closing prayer and the retirement of the colors.

CAP COLORS

The all red cap is for National officers, including our Department National Executive Committeeman (N.E.C.) and Alternate N.E.C. The all white cap is for Department (state) officers; the blue with white top cap is for District officers (we are in the 7th District); and the all blue cap is for everyone else, including Past National, Department, and District officers.

UNIFORM

Technically, if you are wearing your American Legion cap, you are in uniform. The most commonly used full uniform includes a navy blue blazer with the American Legion emblem on the left chest, white shirt with a legion tie, and gray slacks (skirt or slacks for women Legionnaires). The Eisenhower jacket (Legion buttons) and navy pants with a gold stripe down the legs is still a full uniform (with white shirt and tie). Sometimes, when parading in hot weather, the uniform specified will be white shirt and gray or navy pants or your military uniform (if it still fits you).

STAND UP / SIT DOWN

The presiding officer (usually the Commander) will rap the gavel three times to signal everyone to stand and one time to sit down.

COVER / UNCOVER

It is proper to remain covered (wear the Legion cap) during parading or saluting the U.S. Flag, reciting the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion, and during the regular meeting business. It is proper for male Legionnaires to uncover during the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance. When uncovering, place the fingers of the right hand inside the front of the cap with the Legion emblem facing out and hold the hand and cap over the heart.

SALUTING

If wearing the legion cap, the military salute should be executed for the U. S. Flag. If not wearing the cap, place the right hand over the heart. Old-time Legionnaires often salute the Commander when standing to make a report or to get permission to speak, but it is not required. Once the meeting has started and the U.S. Flag is posted, always salute the Flag when entering or leaving the meeting hall (even if just going to go to the restroom)..

THE FIELD

You will hear mention of "the Field" and about "not breaking" it. The area between where the U. S. Flag and the Legion banner are posted is dedicated to those who lost their lives in service to their country. As such, no one should walk through or reach through the Field - walk around the colors.

POW / MIA

The POW/MIA flag or chair cover is placed on a chair in front of the Commander's Station during the opening ceremony.

APPROACHING THE PODIUM

Always approach the podium around the U. S. Flag and stop to salute it before passing behind it. When leaving the podium, if at all feasible, exit around the legion banner, stopping to again salute the U. S. Flag when clear of the Legion banner. If it is necessary to exit around the U.S. Flag, again salute it before continuing around it.