

# THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF IOWA



## DEPARTMENT CONVENTION COLOR GUARD COMPETITION RULES

Revised May 1, 2015



# **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS & RULES**

## **TIME AND PLACE**

Color Guard Contest will be held in the Department Convention city starting at a time to be designated by the Convention Commission (CC). The contest site will be in an appropriate location designated by the CC.

## **SUPERVISION**

Competition will be under the supervision of the CC. All interpretations and rulings made by the CC are made within the framework of the Department rules. These rules properly mandated by the CC, are not subject to review, correction or waiver, unless the CC makes such review, correction or waiver. The rules set forth in this packet will be the rules established for The American Legion Department Color Guard Contests.

## **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

The American Legion sponsored contest participants that are qualified for participation at the Department Convention may receive the contest entry forms by requesting them from the Department headquarters office or by going to The American Legion Department of Iowa web site and downloading the proper contest entry form. Each entry form must be certified by the Adjutant of the unit's sponsoring Post or District. The contest entry form with the Adjutant's signature must be submitted to the Department before the close of the Color Guard Registration meeting at Department Convention. Advance registration is encouraged and may be submitted to: The American Legion of Iowa, Color Guard Competition, 720 Lyon Street, Des Moines, IA 50309.

Order of appearance in the contest will be in reverse order of receipt of entry form with earliest postmark.

The American Legion Department Color Guard Contest does not limit the number of units allowed to compete in the Contest from any Post, Unit or Squadron.

## **CONVENTION REGISTRATION**

All color guard members will be required to register for the Department Convention as a delegate, alternate or guest with The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of The American Legion.

## **MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES**

This is a required meeting. One representative of each competing unit will meet with the Chief Judge of Contests prior to the contest at a time and place to be designated by the Convention Commission. The purpose of this meeting is to receive instructions and transact any business, which may properly come before such meeting. Failure to attend the meeting will result in a penalty.

## **JUDGES**

The Chief Judge, judges, tabulators, and other contest staff are selected each year based upon their experience, consistency, professionalism and communication skills along with the understanding and ability to uphold the rules and regulations as outlined in the manual. The judges are to rank and rate the unit participants.

Five judges will be provided for the color guard classes.

# **COLOR GUARD RULES**

## **CLASS ELIGIBILITY**

### *MILITARY-OPEN CLASS*

All units must be members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family (i.e. Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or American Legion mixed participants). If competing for the Commander's Color Guard, all unit members competing in this class must meet all the requirements for full American Legion membership and be over 18 years of age.

This contest will be open to units composed of seven (7) members or less including the Commanding Officer.

### *ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS*

All units must be members of The American Legion and/or Legion Family (i.e. Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or American Legion mixed participants)

This contest will be open to units composed of not less than four (4) members. If the color guard consists of only four (4) members, the American Flag bearer will give all color guard commands.

## **INSPECTION**

The inspections will certify that all units have the required number of personnel for competition; the required equipment is being carried onto the field of competition, and to ensure that basic personal appearances and condition of uniforms and equipment is in good taste. At the request of the inspection judge, unit members will be required to show their current American Legion Family membership cards.

## **UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT**

The style and color of uniform will be optional for each unit provided they are within the dignity and propriety required when carrying the National Colors.

Required authorized equipment will consist of National Colors and one American Legion Organizational Banner. Additional authorized equipment, such as flags, sidearm, sabers and swords may be carried and simulated.

\*DEFINITION – The Institute of Heraldry, Washington, D.C., has specified in Title 4 of the U.S. Flag Code that the 50-Star American Flag is the Flag of our Country (U.S. Colors); therefore, all others shall be treated as banners. All banners and flags shall be dipped at a reviewing stand except the 50-Star Flag of our Country.

Minimum size of U.S. Colors is 3 feet by 5 feet. No flag shall be larger in size than the U.S. Colors.

## **PERFORMANCE TIMES**

### *MILITARY-OPEN CLASS*

Performance time shall be not more than six (6) minutes. Timing and judging will start for a unit with the first step across the starting line by a member of the unit proper, excluding the Commanding Officer. However, timing and all judging will continue until the last member of the unit proper crosses the finish line, including the Commanding Officer.

## *ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS*

Each color guard will have a maximum of four (4) minutes for their advancing/retiring of colors performance. Timing and judging will start for a unit with the first step across the starting line by **any** member of the unit. A warning signal will be given at the expiration of four (4) minutes. However, timing and all judging will continue until the last member of the unit proper crosses the finish line, including the Commanding Officer.

## **REQUIRED MANEUVERS**

### *MILITARY OPEN CLASS*

Each unit must execute, in any order, the following maneuvers at the Saluting Point: Pass-In-Review, Presentation of Colors, Post and Retrieve. In addition, a unit may execute any other “appropriate” maneuvers during their performance.

#### 1. PASS IN REVIEW

The area of Pass-In-Review shall be ninety (90) inches before and ninety (90) inches after the Saluting Point. This area will be clearly marked. The unit shall be in a company front with the placement of the Commanding Officer at the discretion of the unit. All members, including the Commanding Officer may start the Pass-In-Review with the salute or first step over the line of the Pass-In-Review area. All members of the unit must render the proper salute by displaying “Eyes Right” except: The U.S. Flag bearer shall not dip, but may at the discretion of the unit, render “Eyes Right.” The extreme right element of the unit renders no eyes right, but does render the proper salute unless it is the Commander, in which case an “Eyes Right” is required.

#### 2. PRESENTATION OF COLORS

This maneuver shall be done at a halt, at attention, facing the Saluting Point. The American Legion organization banner shall dip at least momentarily to the Saluting Point. All weapons must render the proper “present arms” at least momentarily. All salutes shall be rendered simultaneously at some point in the presentation.

#### 3. POST AND RETRIEVE

This maneuver includes the U.S. Flag and The American Legion organizational banner. The U.S. Flag is to be posted to the right of the Saluting Point with its front facing the field. Colors must be properly guarded at all times; for guarding purposes, if weapons are used, weapons shall at all times be in the possession of the guarding member. During the ceremony of Posting and Retrieving, two (2) salutes are required, to be executed simultaneously by all members; one directly following posting and one salute directly prior to retrieving colors.

Colors must not be posted for more than sixty (60) seconds. Time shall commence upon the release of the first pike and shall terminate upon the grasp of the last pike. A color is deemed posted immediately upon the release of the pike. A color is deemed retrieved upon the intentional grasp of the pike. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be posted simultaneously, if not so posted the U.S. Flag must be posted last. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be retrieved simultaneously. However, if not so retrieved, the U.S. Flag must be retrieved first.

The U.S. Flag must be guarded at all times. The U.S. Flag is considered as being properly guarded during maneuvers if the guard is within three (3) paces of the U.S. Flag.

## ADVANCING/RETIRING OF COLORS CLASS

Each unit must execute the following maneuver at the Saluting Point: Post and Retrieve. In addition, a unit may execute any other “appropriate” maneuvers during their performance.

### 1. POST AND RETRIEVE

This maneuver includes the U.S. Flag and The American Legion organizational banner. The U.S. Flag is to be posted to the right of the Saluting Point with its front facing the field. Colors must be properly guarded at all times; for guarding purposes, if weapons are used, weapons shall at all times be in the possession of the guarding member. During the ceremony of Posting and Retrieving, two (2) salutes are required, to be executed simultaneously by all members; one directly following posting and one salute directly prior to retrieving colors.

Colors must not be posted for more than sixty (60) seconds. Time shall commence upon the release of the first pike and shall terminate upon the grasp of the last pike. A color is deemed posted immediately upon the release of the pike. A color is deemed retrieved upon the intentional grasp of the pike. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be posted simultaneously, if not so posted the U.S. Flag must be posted last. The U.S. Flag and Banner may be retrieved simultaneously. However, if not so retrieved, the U.S. Flag must be retrieved first. The U.S. Flag must be guarded at all times. The U.S. Flag is considered as being properly guarded during maneuvers if the guard is within three (3) paces of the U.S. Flag.

## CONDUCT OF COLOR GUARD/PENALTIES

1. The contest will be held on a floor with the outside lines and center line marked. A 90-inch (7ft. 6in.) line will be marked on each side of the centerline for the Pass-in-Review area.
2. Each Color Guard will have a designated competition time. Following inspection, the unit will remain available to proceed to the starting line for competition.
3. Once a unit reports to the starting official that the unit is ready, the unit must start within sixty (60) seconds or less. **Failure to start within 60 seconds or less will result in a penalty.**
4. Each Color Guard shall only enter the floor over the designated “starting line” to the left of the Saluting Point, and exit over the designated “finish line” at the opposite end of the field, to the right of the Saluting Point. After timing has commenced, there will be no penalty for marking time at the starting line. The saluting point shall be the center of that sideline of the floor that is to the right of the traditional starting line. The use of colors must be with dignity and propriety. All boundary lines are inviolate at all times except for unit entrance, exit, or for members involved in set up prior to the start of the performance or tear down at the end of the performance.
5. The Commanding Officer and any guard members playing musical instruments shall be judged as a part of the unit proper. All musical instruments must be played within the boundaries of the competition floor.
6. Each Color Guard shall be subject to the rulings of the Chief Judge of Contests with respect to entry on, exit from, conduct on the field, and in the immediate area.
7. The Banner of The American Legion sponsor shall be accorded proper respect at all times.
8. The current competitive flag code, as adopted by The American Legion National Headquarters, will be the rules for proper use in all matters not covered herein. A Bugler and/or Drummer will be judged on the proficiency of the playing or drumming under the General Effect caption. Bugling shall be limited to standard bugle calls.
9. No pyrotechnic, discharge of arms, pressurized canisters, dangerous materials, inflammable liquids, powders, or lives animals will be permitted.

## **OTHER PENALTIES**

A unit violating any rule, or part of a rule for which no specific penalty is provided.

Any color guard breaching standard contest etiquette or failing to comply with directions from contest personnel for which no specific penalty is provided, shall be penalized for each such violation, not less than up to disqualification at the discretion of the Chief Judge and Assistant Chief Judge.

1. Any infraction of flag etiquette. The authority adopted for flag etiquette is the “American Legion Competitive Flag Code,” adopted by the American Legion.
2. Each piece of dropped equipment or uniform.
3. Retrieval by any member of each piece of dropped equipment or uniform. Only judges may retrieve dropped equipment or uniform items.

## **PROTESTS**

Any protest regarding these contests will in all respects conform to and will be disposed of according to these rules. Protests must be filed with the Chief Judge of Contests, no later than thirty (30) minutes following the conclusion of the contest. Copies of the protest must have been given to any other units involved or affected by the protesting group. The protesting unit must be represented by a proper officer at a meeting on said date, time and place announced by the Chief Judge of Contests.

Audio-visual recording equipment may be allowed in the area of competition at the discretion of the Chief Judge of Contests; however, no such evidence will be admissible at a protest meeting.

## **AWARDS and RECOGNITION**

The units with the highest score in each class will be declared the winner of that class.

Prize money will be allocated at the discretion of the Convention Commission as authorized by the Department Executive Committee.

The awards will be determined by the Convention Commission.

## **TIE BREAKER**

In case of a tie for first place, the color guard with the highest general effect score will be declared the winner.

## **DEPARTMENT COMMANDER’S COLOR GUARD**

To be considered for the official Department Commander’s Champion Color Guard of The American Legion, those units consisting of full Legion members must have competed in Military Open Class.