



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPT OF WISCONSIN
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MEMO

Date: October 5, 2021
To: All Wisconsin ALA Entities
From: Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, Department Constitution & Bylaws Chair
Re: Establishing a Quorum for Meetings

As an organization, the American Legion Auxiliary is having difficulty conducting meetings and trying to decide what is an appropriate number of members that must be in attendance to conduct the business of the organization.

I have contacted two licensed professional parliamentarians for their input: one is our nationally appointed parliamentarian and the second is the hired parliamentarian that services the American Legion Auxiliary. Both are extremely knowledgeable about our organization. Using the latest (12th) edition of Robert's Rules of Order, I have reviewed all the sections dealing with this issue.

Quorum of Members: A quorum is the minimum number of members that must be present at the meeting for the business of the organization to be validly transacted. The requirement of a quorum is a protection against totally unrepresentative action in the name of the body by an unduly small number of persons.

In our organization, a provision in the bylaws should specify the number of members that shall constitute a quorum, which should approximate the largest number that can be depended on to attend any meeting, except in very bad weather or other extremely unfavorable conditions. In the absence of such provision, Robert's Rules of Orders mandates the quorum is a majority of the entire membership to hold a valid meeting to conduct business.

My suggestion is that a unit have at least the Presiding Officer, the Secretary and three members at large, for a representation of five in total, to conduct the business of the organization. The Presiding Officer and Secretary cannot be the same person.

Our department cannot mandate a number, only suggest what would be a reasonable number for each entity to conduct business appropriately.

Inasmuch as we are now able to meet by an electronic platform that allows for members in attendance to hear each other simultaneously and participate during the meeting, consideration to use Zoom and/or Free Conference Call could present a reasonable opportunity for members to join in the meeting from the comfort and safety of their own homes.