

CODE OF PROCEDURES

ORATORICAL COMMITTEE

Approved Special D.E.C. December 2025

Section 1:

In the interest of an effective organization and control of American Legion Activities, the Department Oratorical Committee has adopted a Code of Procedures outlining its duties and responsibilities to formulate and guide the Department Oratorical Program.

Section 2:

The Oratorical Committee shall be composed of five (5) members, in accordance with Article IX, Section 2 of the Department Bylaws:

- (a) Two (2) with terms of one (1) year
- (b) One (1) with a term of two (2) years
- (c) One (1) with a term of three (3) years
- (d) One (1) with a term of four (4) years

Thereafter, the Department Commander shall appoint to each Commission and Standing Committee one (1) member for a term of four (4) years and one member for a term of one (1) year, except in the case of an appointment to fill the unexpired term of a deceased or resigned member. The Department Commander will appoint, and the DEC will ratify one of the (5) five members as the committee chair.

Section 3:

Each Oratorical Committee member shall be responsible for a specific Area of Districts within the Department of Oregon. The Chair shall make the Area assignments from within the selected four members of the Committee. At the beginning of each year the committee will appoint individual members to oversee of areas within the State of Oregon.

Areas of Responsibility for Department Oratorical Committee Members (2025 – 2026)

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-------|
| (a) Districts 1, 7 & 2 | Vickie Hajduk | (2yr) |
| (b) Districts 5 & 8 | Vacant | (1yr) |
| (c) Districts 3, 4 & 9 | Dale Jenkins | (3yr) |
| (d) Districts 6 & 10 | Aaron Wetterling | (4yr) |

Section 4:

The Department Oratorical Chair and Committee members will help and assist where needed for the Post, District, and Department contests, and where possible attend each District contest in their area of responsibility.

Section 5:

The Department Oratorical Chair is responsible for preparing the plan for conducting the program for the Department of Oregon. The Department Chair will provide the department contest information to Public Affairs for distribution. The Department Oratorical Chair sets the date and coordinates the arrangements for the Department Contest. There shall be no more than a nominal charge to the Department for the facility in which the Department contest will be held.

- (a) Post/District Contest - Should significant circumstances prevent an in-person post or district contest; the post or district oratorical chair, respectively, shall contact their respective Oratorical Committee Member and/or the Department Oratorical Chair for guidance on conducting a virtual contest.
- (b) Each District may certify one contestant into the department contest. If for any reason the district winner is unable to compete in the Department contest, the district first runner-up may be substituted following approval by The Department of Oregon. If for any reason the Department winner is unable to compete in the entire National contest, the Department first runner up may be substituted following approval by the Department of Oregon.
- (c) The National contest date can vary from year to year. National contests have occurred in March, April and May in past years. To provide consistency to the program and guidance for all levels of the contests, specific months for each level of contest have been designated. This designation will allow Posts to recruit before school is out and again when school starts. Post contests shall be held NLT 31 December. District contests shall be held in January. The Department contest will be held NLT two (2) weeks prior to the National Certification cutoff date. **National Certification cut off date for 2025-2026 is 6 April 2026. The National Contest dates for 2025-2026 are 15-17 May 2026, at Hillsdale University, Hillsdale WI.**
- (d) The 1st holding room is the ONLY place notes for Prepared and Assigned Topics or any form of study material, including phones or other forms of electric devices can be used. All such material will be surrendered to the room attendant on their way to present their prepared oration.
- (e) A raised platform is not compulsory; however, it is strongly recommended.
- (f) All resources for Oratorical (excluding local forms) can be found on Legion.org and Legion.org/Oratorical/Resources. Oratorical Committee Members are to annually check that all District Commanders assigned to them have purged their Oratorical Binder (provided by the Oratorical Committee) files of any outdated forms, briefings etc. and kept the most current copies.

Section 6:

This Committee shall meet at the direction of the Chair or the Department Commander. Upon request of any two members of the Committee, the Chair shall be required to call a special meeting. A quorum of three (3) shall be required for any Committee meeting. The Chair is authorized to conduct the business of the Committee meetings by telephone, video conference, email, or correspondence.

The Chair shall send a copy of the minutes of all Committee meetings to the Department Commander, Americanism Commission Chair, and Committee members. The Americanism Commission Chair shall report for this Committee to the Department Commander and the Department Executive Committee (D.E.C.). The Oratorical Committee Chair shall provide a brief written update to the Americanism Commission Chair for inclusion in scheduled D.E.C. Book of Reports, as well as make a written report of the year's activities and submit it to the Americanism Commission Chair no later than forty-five (45) days before the opening of the Department Convention covering the activities of this Committee for the year. Americanism Commission Chair shall submit this report for inclusion in the Book of Reports.

Section 7:

Scholarships, medals and awards shall be provided as follows for the Department winners:
(\$12,000 for 2025-26 year)

Post & Districts will present only certificates and minor scholarships, no medals.

- (a) 1st Place \$5,000, Oratorical gold medal and 1st place certificate
- (b) 2nd Place \$4,000, Oratorical silver medal and 2nd place certificate
- (c) 3rd Place \$3,000, Oratorical bronze medal and 3rd place certificate
- (d) Oratorical Bronze medal and participation certificate for each remaining contestant

Section 8:

Effective with the 1997 Department contest, scholarship winners will be allowed six (6) years, excluding time spent in the military, from the time of their graduation from high school to use their scholarship. Students may use their scholarships to pay for graduate school. Department shall forward a letter to each winner outlining the requirements and conditions of their scholarship. The Department will send a reminder letter to each winner one (1) year prior to the expiration date of their scholarship.

Since the Oratorical program is “THE AMERICAN LEGION HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM”, all monetary awards at all levels of the competition will be presented in scholarship form and follow all directions in the paragraph above.

Section 9:

Minimum contest facility requirements are as follows:

- (a) One large room in which the contest will be conducted. (A school library is not an appropriate room.)
- (b) Four holding rooms large enough to seat all contestants (up to 10 individuals).
- (c) One room each will be used to accommodate:
 - (1) judges and tabulators
 - (2) pre-contest pooling of contestants
 - (3) post-contest pooling of contestants
 - (4) One smaller room for individual contestants to prepare his/her assigned topic oration.

Section 10:

The Department Oratorical Chair will ensure the Oratorical Committee submits articles to the Oregon Legionnaire for publication, in adherence to established department policy.

Section 11:

The Department Oratorical Chair will submit an annual Oratorical budget request to include the following as a minimum:

- (a) Funding for the Department Oratorical Chair to attend the annual National Combined Americanism Conference, usually in September, for the American Legion Oratorical Department Chairman Training Conference.
- (b) Scholarships, medals and awards funding for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners and medals and certificates for the remaining contestants.
- (c) One (1) in person 1 day Committee meeting, to include possible one (1) overnight stay for four Committee members and lunch for 5.
- (d) Funding for other supplies as needed (i.e. copies of brochures for recruitment, binders for certificates, stopwatches, calculators etc.)
- (e) Funds for possible nominal fees for Department contest facility.

Section 12:

The Oratorical Committee Code of Procedures shall be reviewed annually and updated, as

necessary, by this Committee, and copies provided in advance to the Americanism Commission Chair and the Department Adjutant for review and approval at the Fall D.E.C.

Section 13:

Every Staff member **must** complete a background check (Committee members and Counselors over the age of 18 prior to the session end date). The Committee will provide a roster (including email addresses) to the Department Administrator of those individuals who require said background check. This background check must be completed prior to the start of the annual session. Failure to submit or successfully complete said background check will result in that individual being denied participation in the State program.