

COMMANDER'S GROUP
Congressionally Chartered Veterans Organizations of the
State of Michigan

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

The name of the organization shall be The Commanders' Group, Congressionally Chartered Veterans Organizations of the State of Michigan.

ARTICLE II

Objective

The Commanders' Group will represent all of Michigan's veterans, their dependents, and survivors in an honorable, thoughtful, compassionate and competent manner on all matters regarding legislation and/ or programs that will affect their general circumstances and welfare. This shall be accomplished regardless of their membership or non-membership in any participating organization, and notwithstanding their race, creed, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or political affiliation;

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1: Membership will consist of “*active*” and “*affiliated*” designations. Active member organizations will have voice and voting rights of the group. Affiliate member organizations will have voice, but no vote.

Section 2: Active members; The Commanders' Group shall be comprised of the Commander/President, Adjutant/Secretary, and Legislative Chairperson/Director from each of the Congressionally Chartered Veterans Organizations (Veteran Membership) in the State of Michigan as listed in the Commanders' Group Administrative Procedures Manual.

Section 3: Each active member organization shall submit annual dues of \$75.00 and a current officer contact roster due and payable at the September meeting. All expenses shall be paid by the member organizations participating in the Commanders' Group. Any general expense items shall be paid as stipulated by the Commanders' Group as may be determined from time to time; dues not paid by or on the day of the next meeting will be deemed suspended and will only have voice with no vote on matters until dues are paid in full.

Section 4: Affiliated Veterans Organizations; any bona fide veterans organization with a 501 c 3 status existing in the State of Michigan who is not affiliated with the Commanders' Group, but desires such status, will adhere to the following:

- a.* Submit a current copy of the organization's Constitution and Bylaws.
- b.* Provide a written summary of post, chapters, branches, units or offices within Michigan.
- c.* Supply a written listing of all current statewide officers.

d. Indicate its standing with the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (V A) for the purposes of representing veterans in the pursuit of claims and/or benefits. If a formalized program exists, then provide a written outline/ summary of the program for the last three years.

e. Obtain a nomination and second from two (2) Voting Member of the Commanders' Group at a properly convened meeting.

f. Once the criteria described in the preceding section have been satisfied, the question of Affiliated Membership will be placed on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting of the Commanders' Group. Upon being nominated, seconded, and receiving a majority of the votes for admission, by the members present and voting (with a quorum established), the organization so represented shall become an Affiliated Member of the Commanders' Group.

g. Should an affiliated organization fail to support the stated goals, objectives, or priorities of the Commanders' Group, or conduct itself a manner that seeks to discredit any voting Member organization, its Affiliated Membership may be revoked upon a majority vote at a properly convened meeting. A call for such a vote must be mailed to each Commander at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting where the vote is expected. This written request for an expulsion vote must be signed by no less than two (2) Voting Members of the Commanders' Group. Any nomination for readmission cannot be considered for at least six (6) months from the date when the Affiliated Membership was revoked, and must follow the admission procedure as specified in Section, 4, of this Article.

Section 5: Any organization granted affiliated status prior to the adoption of this Article is not required to submit to the process in Sections 4, but is subject to the sanctions described in Section 4, subsection g, and the readmission procedure thereafter.

Section 6: Voting strength - The voting strength of the Commanders' Group shall be on the basis of one (1) vote for each active member organization, which shall be vested in the Commander of each active member organization. If the Commander shall be absent from a meeting, the vote of his/ her organization may be delegated to another member of the organization for such voting purpose at any meeting. Such delegation of authority shall be announced as soon as the Commander's absence shall be ascertained, and such authority shall prevail for the instant meeting only, unless the authority shall be delegated by the Commander for such subsequent meetings as may be necessary.

Section 7: If an affiliated organization does not attend a meeting of the Commanders Group for two (2) years it will be removed from that status and will be given written notification of the same, if possible.

ARTICLE IV Officers

Section 1: The Officers of the Commanders' Group shall be a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, whose election shall take place annually in September. The Officers shall be active members of the Commanders' Group. The member organization that is elected to chair the group shall provide the group secretary and appoint a Legislative Chairperson. The Chairperson shall nominate a treasurer and/or assistant treasurer and be approved by the Commanders Group. The vice chair will be from the VSO that will provide the chair the following year.

Section 2: Officers of the Commanders' Group shall serve a term of office of approximately one year beginning at the close of the September meeting until the close of the September meeting the following year.

Section 3: A definite rotation of Commanders by the active member organizations shall be set up and adhered to. An active member organization that relinquishes this privilege at the September meeting for any reason would have to wait its turn in the rotation list set-up. Officer rotation will begin with September 10, 2002 by selecting the Commander from that organization in alphabetical order immediately following the Disabled American Veterans. Commanders for succeeding years will continue in alphabetical order of the organizations comprising the Commanders' Group. If a member organization relinquishes their privilege after the September meeting, the next active member in the rotation list will assume responsibility for the remainder of that year and continue for the following year per the rotation.

ARTICLE V Meetings

Section 1: All meetings of the Commanders' Group shall be called by the Chairperson - one in September and at least two other meetings and any other meetings as may be necessary to accomplish the objectives as set forth, at a time and place that shall be as convenient as possible for all concerned. Special meetings shall be convened by petition to the Chairperson by a majority of the voting members. All governed by Robert's Rules of Order latest edition. Meetings may be conducted in-person, virtually, by teleconference, or any combination of the three provided proper quorum and integrity of identification is maintained at a location and time convenient for all concerned.

Section 2: A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the active member organizations at any meeting.

Section 3: To conduct meetings in an orderly and productive manner in the development of its programs, all members of the Commanders' Group shall have a voice without vote in the establishment of such programs. Such members, other than the Commander, shall ask and receive permission from his Commander before taking the floor, entering the discussion, or making a presentation to the Commanders' Group. Commanders/ Presidents/Delegates of Affiliated Member Organizations may have a voice at meetings (without a vote) with the consent of the Chairperson.

ARTICLE VI Committees

Section 1: (a) The Legislative committee will consist of the designated legislative chairperson and appointed representative from each active member group. Prior to the start of a new State of Michigan Legislative session, the member organizations will submit their legislative priorities separately to the appointed Legislative Chairperson of the Commanders' Group. The Chairperson will consolidate the priorities into one document to avoid duplication. They shall

then be reviewed by the Legislative Committee for comments and recommended changes. Following the review, the various legislative priorities will be ranked by importance and discussed at a properly convened meeting of the Commanders' Group. After discussion, and by means of a roll-call vote, a single set of legislative priorities will be selected by the Commanders' Group. The legislative priorities may be amended by resolution and reviewed by the Legislative Committee. After review by the Legislative Committee the amended resolution shall be forwarded to the Commander's Group for a vote at a regular meeting, special meeting, by mail or email vote, or virtual meeting, if necessary.

(b) The Legislative Committee should meet prior to any regular meeting of the Commanders Group. The Legislative Committee may meet as many other times as the Legislative Chair feels necessary or upon a petition of more than five members of the Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee may meet in person, or virtual meeting. Votes can be taken at those meetings, and votes may be taken by mail, email, or virtually since new Legislation may be introduced at any point that may need to be reviewed and a recommendation made to the Commanders group for approval or in cases of less than 3 days' notice on a bill the Chair of the Commanders Group may approve action on a Bill by the Legislative Chair.

(c) The Legislative Committee or any member shall not correspond or represent any issue to the public, media, or elected officials without the consent of the Commanders Group that the position they are presenting is the position of the Michigan Commanders Group. The legislative Chair will normally be the spoke person to the Michigan Legislators but only with the Chair of the Commanders group approval.

(d) The Commanders' Group members are encouraged to use its collective and individual resources to secure the passage of the desired legislation and the implementation of the preferred programs.

(e) Nothing precludes any of the Commander's Group veteran service organizations from pursuing a legislative priority not listed in the Commanders Group priorities.

Section 2: The Commanders' Group shall use its collective and individual resources to secure the passage of the desired legislation and the implementation of the preferred programs.

Section 3: The Veterans Service Officer Rehabilitation Committee (VSOR&SC) shall be made up of the Service Directors of the Chartered Veterans Organizations receiving State Grants from the State of Michigan. The committee will agree on a Chairperson to report to the Commanders Group the activities of the accredited veteran service officers, updates from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency relationship, and any other important information.

Section 4: Michigan Veteran of the Year Program Committee -The chairperson of the Commanders' Group shall appoint the Michigan Veteran of the Year award committee and a Chairperson to oversee and conduct the program.

- a.* The chairperson will oversee the Michigan Veteran of the Year committee, coordinate the activities with the representative of the designated venue for presentation, and send

out nomination forms to all commanders in the Commanders' Group and affiliated organizations and others such as the President of the Michigan Veterans County Counselors organization.

- b. A letter will also be sent out to all judges provided from the Commanders' Group or affiliated organizations on a date for the selection of the Michigan Veterans of the Year for that year.
- c. Nominations and selection process will be secret, no member on the panel will advertise nor discuss with the commander of his or her organization who the recipient is, until the day of the presentation at the designated venue for presentation.
- d. A Public Relations member should also be placed on this committee from the Commanders' Group, so that media advisement to the community is available by the local newspaper and or media in coordination with the representative of the designated venue.

ARTICLE VII Amendments

The body may amend its Bylaws by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members present at any regular or specially called meeting, provided; however, that such amendments have been submitted and sent to each Commander via postal service or electronic mail ten (10) days prior to a meeting when such amendment is presented for a vote.

AMENDED

- Amendments to Articles V & VI - Approved and adopted December 2, 1971, to become effective on the date of the next meeting of the Commanders' Group.
- Amendment to Article X - Approved and adopted September 21, 1972.
- Amendments to Articles V & VIII - Approved and adopted October 23, 1972.
- Amendment to Article II - Approved and adopted November 9, 1989
- Amendments to Articles II, VII, IX, and the addition of Article XIII - Approved and adopted January 17, 1991.
- Addition of Article XIV - Approved and adopted April 27, 1993.
- Amendment to Article II - Approved and adopted April 28, 1999.
- Amendments to Articles IV, V, IX, X, XI, and XII - Approved and adopted July 9, 2002.
- Amendment to Article IV, Section 8 - Approved and adopted September 10, 2002.
- Amendment to Article XI - Approved and adopted September 10, 2002.
- Addition of Article XV - Approved and Adopted September 10, 2002.
- Amendment to Article XIV - Approved and adopted September 20, 2007
- Revision to Bylaws – Approved and adopted September 21, 2016
- Amendment to the Bylaws – Approved and adopted October 20, 2021 – Creation of Administrative Procedure Manual
- Amendment to the Bylaws - Approved and adopted July 12, 2022 – Amending Article V, Section 1 of the Bylaws - Added phrase beginning with (Meetings may be conducted)
- Amendment to the Bylaws – Approved and adopted May 5, 2022 – Administrative Change to Bylaws – change word commander to Chairperson and vice-chairperson.

- Amendment to Bylaws – Approved and adopted May 25, 2022 – Additions to Article II – Added words (religion, sexual orientation)
- Amendment to Bylaws – Approved and adopted March 24, 2025 - Revision to ARTICLE VI, Section I , Legislative Committee and Section 2.

Officer rotation schedule: see Administrative Procedure Manual