



JHG By-laws and Guidelines

Sponsoring Organization: Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7907

Updated 03 March 2018

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Article 1. INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1-1: The mission of the Joint Honor Guard (JHG) is to provide funeral honors and assistance to all Veterans and their families during their time of need. The JHG will promote Americanism, dignity, and respect for our country's warriors by upholding the utmost professionalism and integrity through its conduct and image at all times. With the responsibility bestowed on us, we will never forget that it is the Veteran who commands the dignity we protect. We will always conduct our missions, in humbled reverence, to the best of our ability.

SECTION 1-2: CORE VALUES

HONOR - A code of personal integrity and honor guides those who do the right thing when no one is looking. It is not only a duty, but also a distinction, as those who possess honor are held in honor. It is found in one's beliefs, but exhibited through one's actions.

COURAGE - When other principles are tested, it is courage that prevents them from crumbling. It is not ignoring fear, but being active even in the face of fear. Courage is the guardian of all other values. It is there when times are toughest, when difficult decisions have to be made. It takes the form of mental, physical, and ethical strength; and is found in the backbone of every member of the JHG.

COMMITMENT - Commitment is the spirit of determination found in every member of the JHG. It is what compels us to serve our nation and its Veterans, and to continue on when others quit. Commitment does not take breaks and it cannot be faked. It measures and proves one's desire, dedication, and faithfulness.

DUCTUS EXEMPLO – JHG members put honor, courage and commitment to the test with Ductus Exemplo, Latin for "Lead by Example." These core principles are not just taught at recruit training—they are embodied everyday by our actions.

SECTION 1-3: The purpose of these bylaws is to assist in the definition of roles and duties of the JHG. Any perceived conflict with these bylaws, should be brought to the attention of the JHG Captain as soon as possible. These bylaws cannot override US Code or VFW Post 7907 bylaws. If any of these bylaws are in violation of VFW bylaws, US Code or federal rules and regulations, then the appropriate rules or regulations will preside over the by-laws.

Article 2. SPONSOR

The JHG is sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7907, 12342 Old Pomerado Road, Poway, California 92064. The sponsoring organization is responsible for ensuring a suitable meeting place and facilities for JHG meetings, selection of leadership, and storage of organizational property to include rifles and ammunition.

Article 3. JOINT HONOR GUARD ORGANIZATION

The members of this organization shall consist of at a minimum the following officers; JHG Captain, 1stSgt, Adjutant, Quartermaster, and the JHG members. All registered members are members of the JHG Committee. The JHG Captain will be selected and appointed by the VFW Commander. All other JHG officers will be appointed by the JHG Captain.

Article 4. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

The executive board consists of JHG Captain, 1stSgt, Quartermaster, and Adjutant. Program accomplishments are the Executive Committee's responsibility.

Article 5. DUTIES

The duties of the officers shall include the following.

SECTION 5-1: CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES - Include membership on the Executive Board; attending the monthly VFW and American Legion meetings and reporting back to the Executive Board; planning and conducting the quarterly JHG Meetings with the 1stSgt; conducting the quarterly drill and developing the drill program plan for presentation to membership with the 1stSgt; and chairing any monthly Executive Board e-meetings that may occur.

SECTION 5-2: 1STSGT RESPONSIBILITIES – Responsibilities include membership of the Executive Board; performing all duties as requested by the Captain in planning the quarterly meetings under the Captain's guidance; planning drill ceremonies, and in the absence of the Captain, conducting JHG drill.

SECTION 5-3: ADJUTANT RESPONSIBILITIES - Include membership on the Executive Board; attending Executive Meetings and presenting written minutes of the previous meeting; taking minutes to present at the next meeting; financial reports to VFW Post 7907; sending out mailings/e-mail requested by the Captain; coordinate flag retirements. Additionally, the Adjutant will supervise the IT Manager.

SECTION 5-4: QUARTERMASTER - Responsible for the procurement and servcability of all organizational Equipment; responsible for the servcability of all organizational rifles; and is responsible for all ammunition.

SECTION 5-5: FIRING PARTY COMMANDER – Will be appointed for each mission. Responsible for organizing the Joint Honor Guard detail for their assigned mission; coordinating with the service Chaplain and service members providing honors.

SECTION 5-6: COLOR SERGEANT – Will be appointed for each operation. Responsible for organizing the Color Guard detail for their assigned operation; coordinating with the service organization.

Article 6. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 6-1: FEES – Currently there are no membership fees.

SECTION 6-2: Eligibility in the JHG is open to all men and women 16 years of age and older.

SECTION 6-3: RECRUITMENT - Recruitment is the responsibility of every member of the JHG.

Article 7. STEPS FOR JOINING

Whenever a citizen desires to become a part of the JHG they should contact any member of the JHG who can then direct them to the Adjutant.

An interest form must be completed for each potential member. Each 16 to 17 year old citizen must have at least one parent/guardian complete the interest form. Parent/guardian must also sign for acceptance of the Bylaws requirements.

Once the interest form is completed and sent the Adjutant, there are three steps to be taken:

- a. The prospective member will be invited to a quarterly meeting.
- b. After attending a quarterly meeting, the prospective member will be invited to a non-funeral event or a second quarterly meeting.
- c. After completing the above two steps, the prospective member will be voted on by the JHG to determine if membership will be accepted.

A liability and photo release form must be completed and kept on file in advance of the first mission attended by each member.

New members are welcome join the JHG at any time in the year.

Article 8. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Attendance at scheduled quarterly meetings is expected if available. However, if any member misses two consecutive meetings, and does not participate in a mission or operation during that quarter, they will be removed from the active roster. Only members on the active roster will receive notifications of missions or operations. In order to be placed back on the active roster, a member must attend a quarterly meeting.

Article 9. CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

JHG members are expected to follow the Core values and adhere to the by-laws. Disruptive behavior, failure to follow instructions, fighting, and use of bad language or alcohol while representing the JHG are some examples of behavior which will not be tolerated.

SECTION 9-1: GENERAL RULES

Rule 1: Conduct yourself by the Core values.

Rule 2: Insults or physical aggression will not be tolerated from anyone.

Rule 3: Always leave an area neater than when you arrived.

Rule 4: Follow all instructions given by JHG Officers, Firing Party Commanders, and/or Color Sergeants.

SECTION 9-2: UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

A member of the JHG is expected to behave themselves at all meetings and missions and uphold the Core values at all times. The following behaviors (not a complete list) may result in disciplinary action:

- a. Using foul, profane, abusive, demeaning, or offensive language.
- b. Racial, ethnic, or religious slurs; and harassment of any kind.
- c. Use or possession of drugs or alcohol on missions or operations.
- d. Antagonizing, intimidating, or hazing.
- e. Disrespect to any member of a Veterans family while on a mission.
- f. Failure to follow instructions given by JHG Officers, Firing Party Commanders and/or Color Sergeants.

SECTION 9-3: On those rare occasions when discipline is necessary, the following action will be taken:

- **VERBAL REPRIMAND** - The member will be taken aside and the incident will be discussed. If the member is a minor, their parents will be called to report the incident.
- **REMOVAL FROM MEETING OR MISSION** - The member will again be taken aside and spoken to but they will not be allowed to rejoin the meeting or mission. If the member is a minor, their parents will be asked to take them home. They can rejoin when they attend during the next meeting or mission.

Article 10. DISMISSAL FROM JHG

If the member does not correct the behavior, the Captain will dismiss them from the JHG. If the member is a minor, their parents will be asked to take them home. Upon dismissal from the JHG, the member will surrender all JHG uniform logo items without reimbursement within one week of dismissal.

The above provision-will not be invoked except as a last resort. Leaders are to discuss problems with members and/or the parent(s)/guardian(s) as they occur. When no satisfactory conclusion can be arrived at, Leaders will refer the problems to the JHG Captain. In the case of minors, the Captain will contact the family in an effort to reach a mutual understanding before the final action is taken.

Article 11. MEETINGS

JHG meetings are usually scheduled on the first Saturday of the third month of each quarter (i.e. March, June, September and December) at VFW Post 7907 from 1000-1200. Meetings are intended to accomplish administrative requirements, maintenance of rifles and/or unit equipment, drill, and practice.

Article 12. UNIFORMS

In that we are all coming from different organizations and backgrounds, we need to have a uniform appearance that does not compete for attention with any service members that are providing final honors for our Veterans.

SECTION 12-1: THE JHG DRESS UNIFORM – The dress uniform will consist of a black military style patrol cover with JHG logo, black short sleeve polo shirt with JHG logo, khaki trousers, black web belt, black socks, and black shoes. A black long sleeve jacket with JHG logo will be worn during inclement weather.

SECTION 12-2: MALE AND FEMALE MEMBERS - Male members will have a “male cut” shirt and will wear their shirt tucked in at the waist. Female members will have a “female cut” shirt will wear their shirt un-tucked.

SECTION 12-3: UNIFORM INSPECTION - A uniform inspection will be conducted as needed. Members are expected to wear their uniforms clean and neat.

SECTION 12-4: NON-POLITICAL BODY - The Joint JHG is a non-political body. As such, the JHG and members identifying themselves as members of the JHG **MUST NOT** support or appear to support political candidates or parties. This includes the wearing of uniforms at political events. Every member, however, is encouraged to participate in the American political process as an individual.

SECTION 12-5: THE JHG WORK UNIFORM – For operations not involving ceremony, members will wear the black military style patrol cover with JHG logo and black T-Shirt. A POW/MIA T-Shirt is recommended. Due to the hazards associated with these types of operations, closed toed shoes and jeans are mandatory.

Article 13. LIABILITY AND PHOTO RELEASE FORMS

Mission liability and photo release forms must be completed by each member and parent/guardian for each minor member, once yearly, and must be on file before a member can attend their first mission or operation.

Article 14. MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS

SECTION 14-1: MISSIONS - Funerals and interments are generally on call. Some missions may come up with little or no notice. In order to support a funeral or interment mission, a minimum of three members are required.

SECTION 14-2: OPERATIONS - Requests for Colors Guards (Operations) are also on call. In order to support a request for a Color Guard, a minimum of three members are required. Requests for a Color Guard will only be considered if they are in support of Veterans events or the National Day of Prayer.

SECTION 14-3: OPERATIONS OTHER THAN CEREMONIAL – Operations other than ceremonial may include flag retirements, meal service support at the post, hospital visits, or other requests supporting Veterans or Veterans events from VFW Post 7907.

SECTION 14-4: REQUESTS - All requests for missions or operations must be submitted to the Adjutant to be vetted and then forwarded by the Adjutant to the Captain for published calls for volunteers.

SECTION 14-5: GUESTS –

- a. The interment of a Veteran is a solemn and reverent event. Guests are **NOT** allowed at any mission.
- b. Guests are **NOT** allowed at any private operations that the JHG has been requested to support.
- c. Guests **ARE** allowed at any public operations that the JHG has been requested to support. If a JHG member is bringing a guest to a public event, that member is responsible for any transportation, water, food, etc. for their guest.

Article 15. FUNDRAISING

SECTION 15-1: All monies raised through unit dues or fund raising efforts are unit funds and technically belong to, VFW Post 7907.

SECTION 15-2: All monies raised either through fund raising efforts are unit funds ONLY and are not permitted to be placed into individual accounts. No individual JHG accounts are to be established using funds raised by our fund-raising efforts or through unit dues. Unit funds may be used to reduce the cost of participation, including the cost of obtaining uniforms, buy equipment for the JHG, or for any other legitimate need of the JHG, but may not be used for the private benefit of an individual member who happens to participate in fund raising due to IRS rules.

SECTION 15-3: All monies raised by the JHG are to be “deposited” with the VFW Quartermaster and are to be held as an line item within the VFW’s budget. Requests for withdraws from the JHG line item will be made from the Adjutant to the VFW Quartermaster.

SECTION 15-4: Financial reports are to be submitted to the VFW by the Adjutant each quarter, due no later than the third Wednesday of the month following the quarter, and must include (at a minimum) the account balance from previous month; all credits by line item with date, description and amount of each credit; all disbursements by line item with date, description, and amount of disbursement; and a quarter-end total for the account.

SECTION 15-5: Additionally, the Adjutant will submit an end of the fiscal year report due to VFW Post 7907 no later than the second Wednesday in July. The end of the fiscal year report will be included in the VFW's Form 990EZ to the IRS for the financial year. The financial year runs July 1st to June 30th. The end of fiscal year report must include the following:

Revenue

- a. Contributions, gifts, grants, and similar amounts received.
- b. Membership dues and assessments.
- c. Gross income from fundraising events.
- d. Other revenue.

Expenses

- a. Professional fees and other payments to independent contractors.
- b. Occupancy, rent, utilities, and maintenance.
- c. Printing, publications, postage, and shipping.

SECTION 15-6: The Adjutant must ensure that all members and parents of minors are made aware of these requirements. This is accomplished by ensuring all have read and signed a signature/agreement sheet acknowledging they have read, understand, and will adhere to the bylaws on a yearly basis. It is important that VFW Post 7907 ensures that the Congressional Charter and the nonprofit tax exempt status of the Post are protected with the same financial controls and safeguards used by the Post.

Article 16. REVISION OF BYLAWS

These bylaws will be reviewed at least once each year at an announced meeting open to all members and parents of minor members. These bylaws can be amended by majority vote of the members with notice given via email prior to the quarterly meetings.

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**BYLAW – JOINT HONOR GUARD PARTICIPATION STATEMENT
2018**

JHG By-laws and Guidelines

Sponsoring Organization: Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7907

I have received the Bylaws for the Joint Honor Guard for the year 2018 and agree to abide by them.

I agree to be an active member of the Joint JHG, realizing that if each member takes on a small part of the program responsibility, the program can be that rewarding for all.

Name _____

Member Signature **Date**

Guardian Signature (if Under 18) **Date**

Appendix A

**PARTICIPANT ANNUAL LIABILITY AND PHOTO RELEASE FORM
AND APPROVAL BY PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIAN**

First Name of Participant	Middle Name	Last Name	Month	Day Birth date	Year
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HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

I understand that participation in Honor Guard activities involves a certain degree of risk and can be physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. I have carefully considered the risk involved and have given consent for myself and/or my child to participate in this activity. I also understand that participation in this activity is entirely voluntary and requires participants to abide by applicable rules and standards of conduct. I release the Honor Guard, its officers and members, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7907, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with the activity from any and all claims or liability arising out of this participation. In case of emergency involving my child, I understand every effort will be made to contact me. In the event I cannot be reached, I hereby give my permission to the medical provider selected by the adult leader in charge to secure proper treatment, including hospitalization, anesthesia, surgery, or injections of medication for my child. Medical providers are authorized to disclose to the adult in charge examination findings, test results, and treatment provided for purposes of medical evaluation of the participant, follow-up and communication with the participant's parents or guardian, and/or determination of the participant's ability to continue in the program activities.

I also hereby assign and grant to the Joint Honor Guard and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, as well as their authorized representatives, the right and permission to use and publish the photographs/film/videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings made of me or my child at all Joint Honor Guard activities, and I hereby release the Joint Honor Guard and the Veterans of Foreign War, the local Post, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with the activity from any and all liability from such use and publication. I further authorize the reproduction, sale, copyright, exhibit, broadcast, electronic storage, and/or distribution of said photographs/film/videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings without limitation at the discretion of the Joint Honor Guard, and I specifically waive any right to any compensation I may have for any of the foregoing.

Participant Signature	Month	Day	Year
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Parent/Guardian Printed Name	Parent/Guardian Printed Signature	Month	Day	Year
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Joint Honor Guard
Appendix B