

Civility and Respect Guidance

American Legion Post 68

Purpose

American Legion Post 68 is committed to maintaining a welcoming, orderly, and mission-focused environment for Legionnaires, Riders, guests, volunteers, and community partners. Civility and respect help preserve the dignity of every person, strengthen comradeship, and support the American Legion mission of service to veterans, military members, their families, and the community.

Guiding Principles

- Treat every person with dignity, courtesy, and fairness.
- Act with honesty, integrity, responsibility, and good judgment.
- Support a spirit of goodwill within the American Legion.
- Focus disagreements on issues, policies, and decisions - not personal attacks.
- Protect the reputation, property, and good order of Post 68.
- Promote an environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, abuse, or discriminatory conduct.

Expected Conduct at Post 68

- Speak respectfully, even when disagreeing.
- Listen without interrupting and allow others the opportunity to be heard.
- Use appropriate language and avoid insults, profanity directed at others, threats, ridicule, or rumor-spreading.
- Respect Post officers, committee chairs, volunteers, and members performing assigned duties.
- Follow Post rules, bylaws, house rules, meeting procedures, and lawful directions from authorized Post leadership.
- Respect the Post equipment, furnishings, memorials, flags, records, and the property of others.
- Drink responsibly and never allow alcohol or personal frustration to become an excuse for disrespectful conduct.

Meeting Civility

Post meetings work best when members follow established procedure and show courtesy to the Chair and one another. Members who wish to speak should wait to be recognized, identify themselves when appropriate, and keep comments relevant to the matter under discussion. Debate should be firm but respectful, with one person speaking at a time. The goal is not to win an argument; the goal is to help Post 68 make informed decisions in service to its members and mission.

Examples of Civil and Respectful Behavior

- “I see this differently, and here is my reason.”
- “I would like to ask a question before we vote.”
- “Thank you for your work on this committee.”
- “Let’s return to the agenda item.”
- “I apologize for interrupting; please continue.”
- “Can we discuss this privately after the meeting?”

Conduct That Undermines Civility

- Personal insults, name-calling, mockery, or hostile gestures.
- Yelling over others or refusing to yield when directed by the Chair.
- Bullying, intimidation, threats, or repeated unwanted confrontation.
- Derogatory comments about members, guests, volunteers, or staff.
- Discriminatory remarks or conduct based on personal characteristics.
- Spreading rumors or using Post spaces to damage another person’s reputation.
- Misusing alcohol, Post property, or Post communications in a way that disrupts good order.

Addressing Concerns

1. If safe and appropriate, calmly ask that the conduct stop.
2. If the matter occurs during a meeting, allow the Chair to restore order and apply meeting rules.
3. Report serious or repeated concerns to the Post Commander, Adjutant, Sergeant-at-Arms, or other designated Post officer.
4. Document concerns with date, time, location, people involved, witnesses, and a brief factual description.
5. Post leadership should review concerns promptly, fairly, and consistently with Post bylaws, house rules, and applicable American Legion procedures.
6. Retaliation against a person who raises a concern in good faith should not be tolerated.

Shared Responsibility

Civility is not the responsibility of one officer or committee. Every member and guest contributes to the tone of Post 68. By choosing respectful words, listening with patience, and resolving conflict through proper channels, we honor those who served, strengthen our Post, and model the values of citizenship and comradeship for the community.