

National Convention Committee Strategic Plan Sons of the American Legion

The mission and purpose of the Convention Committee is quite simple...Ensure that the Sons of The American Legion National Convention is successful.

The Convention Committee is unique in nature since it is focused solely on the next National Convention, thereby being a temporary annual committee with no permanent members.

The goals for the convention committee and chairman is to provide, the National Commander information about the host city, where convention will be held. The convention committee Chairman will provide information at the fall and Spring National Executive Committee meetings, then throughout the year.

1. Preparation for National Convention at Host City. Host detachment should provide information about the city and a general idea of activities. Provide information of what the city/state has to offer during down time/to do at their leisure.
2. Chairman will pass along information, to committee members about convention, in a timely manner. That includes prepping the next convention committee chairman, to take over after national convention. The Convention Committee in my knowledge doesn't have a Co-chair. ~~It is suggested the~~ ~~suggest the~~ previous Convention Committee chairman should establish and fill that position as needed.
3. Each Convention Committee Chairman, should designate a representative, from his host detachment, in case of his absence, due to any circumstances, (example; some sort of severe sickness and/or emergency surgery, injury, death in the family, etc.)
4. The host detachment should form a committee and assigned task to be accomplished for national convention. (Example; a dinner or outing during convention, creating and selling pins and etc.)
5. Wish List :
 - Have a predetermined budget and preliminary funds which could be used for Detachment or Committee led activities. "Welcome to XXXX", additional information packets, or other non-fundraising activities which a Detachment or the Committee would like to pursue.
 - Have the next Convention Chairman selected before the Spring NEC meeting
 - Chairman should be from the Detachment the Convention is located.
 - ~~Have banners, bunting, balloons, and decorations for the convention hall.~~
 - ~~Arrange for special guest speakers like celebrities, military, or politicians.~~

Comment [KAG1]: When we spoke in Milwaukee. I stated that in the coming years there will be a legion family night on Saturday that will have an opening show with an emcee, VIPs and entertainment. This will be in lieu of opening ceremonies for all three conventions TAL, ALA, SAL.

Composition of the Committee

The primary committee member of the Convention Committee is the Committee Chairman. The Committee Chairman is usually a member who is located in or near where the National Convention is located. The Committee Chairman is the main contact for the convention. The selection of the Committee Chairman is done by the Chairman of the Committee on Committees and the National Commander.

The committee can comprise of multiple members with different tasks to complete for the event. Ideally, the Committee Chairman will engage different individuals and entities in order to accomplish the ultimate goal of a successful convention. The assignment of tasks can be separated by activity; the Pre-Convention Events, the Friday Night Dinner, the Convention Pins, the Tours, Local Attractions, Convention Activities, and Transportation.

The Past Convention Committee Chairmen are considered consultants to the Committee, in particular the most recent Past Convention Committee Chairman from the previous National Convention.

Logistics & Programming

All Logistics and Programming for the [SAL National Convention](#) is handled through The American Legion National Headquarters National Convention & Meetings Division ([Convention Commission](#)) via the [SAL national liaison](#). If any commission or committee requires meeting rooms, AV equipment, tables, chairs, or displays during the convention, it is recommended to contact the [SAL national liaison who will coordinate with the National Convention & Meetings Division](#) as soon as the need is determined. The contact is:

[National Convention & Meetings SAL National Liaison \(Ken George\)](#)

The American Legion National Headquarters

Phone [\(317\) 630-139376](#)

Fax [\(317\) 630-1215](#)

[700 North Pennsylvania Street](#)

[Indianapolis, IN 46204](#)

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Comment [KAG2]: I think we talked about this. Anything related to the SAL national convention inside the hall it goes through the liaison who coordinates with convention division. Anything detachment related activities outside the convention hall the detachment can arrange for those services locally.

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Budget/Funding

There is a small budget for this committee, it is around \$3000.00 set aside for convention. The funds for the dinner are based directly on the ticket sales and is usually handled through the sponsoring Squadron and its Post. If a convention pin is designed, the pins are paid for through the sale of the pins. If there is the possible need for transportation to the Friday Night Dinner, the cost is covered through the ticket sales. If an outing is organized, the cost of the outing is determined by the outing and any transportation to the outing.

It is quite simple, since there is a small budget/ funds set aside for the convention, all activities during the convention must be self funded and should be handled through a sponsoring Squadron, Detachment, or private donors. There is not an established budget for this committee at this time. Typically items which the Detachment will execute (Friday Night Social, Sales of Pins, etc.) are executed to be a fund raiser (or at worst cost neutral) and should be fully funded through the Detachment. The rest of the responsibilities of the committee/Detachment (what to do while in the area, other information) can be completed electronically and/or will be handled through the National Convention & Meetings Divisions through the Convention Book, Convention App, or other media.

If there is a desire to have a non-fund raising item funded and managed by this Committee it needs to be included in the Budgeting process through the Finance Committee.

National Convention Committee/Host Detachment Responsibilities:

Pre-Convention Functions

If the membership shows any interest, a pre-convention activity can be organized. In the past, a golf scramble tournament was set for Thursday before the convention. Other dinners or meetings can also be organized for any sub groups such as regions, commissions, committees, or detachments. Other special interest tours can also be arranged. However, the costs for any pre-convention activity must be firmly established and a registration form must be prepared with set deadlines and registration contact and address.

Friday Night Dinner

The Friday Night Dinner should be located at an American Legion Post home in the local area and should be sponsored by an SAL Squadron, if it is feasible. The menu is determined by the convention committee, usually something that is a local favorite or whatever will sell tickets. Whatever the menu, the ticket price must be at a reasonable price.

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Comment [KAG3]: Need to determine who the host is detachment or national. Dinners and transportation hosted by the post or squadron are the planning and financial responsibility of the said post of squadron to arrange those amenities' and logistics. Coins and pins created and paid for with national funds can not be sold privately they must be sold via Emblem Sales. If a detachment wants to design a coin or pin as the host they must obtain permission for design use then pay for them in advance with detachment funds. If after purchase they want to sell those items that is ok.

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If the location of the hosting American Legion Post is at some distance from the convention site, a means of transportation to and from the site is highly suggested. The transportation can be arranged through the Hosting Convention Committee, by the American Legion Post hosting the dinner, or it can be determined to self drive to the site. If there are any costs involved, it must be reflected in the dinner ticket price.

Convention Pins

The design of the convention pin is up to the Convention Committee and the National Commander. The number of pins to produce is determined upon the marketing of the pin and the attendance to the convention. If the convention pin is to be sold, the price should not exceed \$5.00 per pin. [This is funded and managed through the Host Detachment, it is NOT funded through the National Organization.](#)

The American Legion Emblem Sales Special Orders is an excellent source to use to assist in the design and production of the convention pin. Remember, because the SAL logo is a trademarked logo, you must use a licensed manufacturer to produce the convention pin like Emblem Sales or otherwise you must submit a Special Use application that must be first submitted through the Department (not Detachment) Adjutant for approval, then it is submitted to Emblem Sales for approval. The contact for Emblem Sales Special Orders is:

The American Legion Emblem Sales Special Orders
5745 Lee Road
Indianapolis, IN 46216
Phone (866) 632-7131
Fax (317) 630-1250

A location to distribute the convention pins at the Convention site should be arranged with in mind that personnel is needed to assist in dispensing the pins. A presale of the convention pin should be considered. If there is a presale of the convention pins, a reservation form must be designed and circulated.

Tours, Local Attractions, Convention Activities, Transportation, & Maps

The Committee Chair will work closely with the Hosting Convention Committee to receive information on any tours, local attractions, and the convention activities such as the parade and after parade party, the convention transportation, and any local maps of the convention area.

Reports, Flyers, Forms, & Newsletter Articles

The Committee Chair is responsible to report the progress of the Convention Committee during the Fall and Spring NEC meetings. A written report must be submitted at least one month prior to the meetings.

Prior to the June SAL Newsletter, an article outlining the convention, what to expect, and any local flavor must be submitted before the deadline.

The Friday Night Dinner flyer, with the location, ticket price, the menu, transportation information, and registration form must be completed one month prior to the Spring NEC meeting.

Coordination with other groups **Other Coordination responsibilities:**

The responsibilities of the Convention Committee and the Host Detachment, while important to ensure a successful Convention, are just a small piece of the overall coordination effort. Coordination and Communications are critical to ensure the activities the Committee/Host Detachment are planning are aligned with all the other efforts. The National Commander, National Adjutant, and National Liaison are responsible for all the “Business Aspects of the Convention” and coordinating this with the National Convention Commission. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Schedule of Events
- Meeting Location/Room Planning and coordination
- All items required for committee meetings and the Convention.

The National Convention Committee and Host Detachment Coordination Points include:
The Convention Committee is the central point for other S.A.L. Committees/Commissions to request any needs that are not part of the “business portion” of the Convention. The American Legion National Headquarters National Convention & Meetings Division (Convention Team) will work to meet all the requests, see section Logistics & Programming on Page 2. But all requests pertaining to National Committees/Commissions should be funneled through the Convention Committee; is to be a local resource to help other Committees/Commissions Plan any non-Business Activities they will have.

One example of this is the National Children and Youth Academy

- o The Hosting Detachment and this Committee should help identify the opportunity/options for these activities and help the requesting group with the planning details.
- o It is not the responsibility of this committee to request/manage any funding required. The funding needs to come from the budget/funds available to the group coordinating that request.
- o It is also not the responsibility of this committee to make the final arrangements and/or sign any contracts. Those items are completed by the National Convention Commission, through the National Liaison.

Utilization of the S.A.L. Liaison for all requests/coordination with the Convention Team. While the Committee is the “funnel point” for all committee/commissions for the “non business portion” of the Convention, the S.A.L. Liaison is the “funnel point” for ALL coordination between the S.A.L. and the Convention Team. It is very important to stay in contact and coordinate with the S.A.L. Liaison for all Convention Activities.

Utilization of the S.A.L. Liaison for schedules/agenda/timing of the activities it is responsible for. The National Adjutant, National Commander, and others will be

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preparing the Business/Meetings portion of the Convention. As these plans are developed the S.A.L. Liaison will help keep the committee aware of the Convention agenda, which will help with finalize any timelines the Committee/Detachment are responsible for.

There is a notable difference between the planning and coordination of "National Activities" and "Detachment/Squadron Activities".

All "National Activities" need to be coordinated through the S.A.L. Liaison and the Convention Team. This would be items like the Youth Academy Room, transportation for any Youth Academy activities, or other *National* Committee/Commission Activity.

Anything being coordinated/funded by Detachments and/or local Squadrons to *not need* to go through the S.A.L Liaison and the Convention Team, but can if desired or if there is a benefit. An example is the Friday Night Social, which is a Detachment/Squadron Activity. Picking the local, developing the plans, selling the tickets, and executing the evening is a Detachment/Squadron activity and is not a part of the Convention Teams responsibility. Transportation for this event should also be arranged by the Detachment/Squadron, but *may* be tied into the transportation plans for the rest of the Convention if there is a benefit. If there is a desire to do so this should be requested through the S.A.L. Liaison.

Stay in contact and coordinate activities with your Department. There are likely many opportunities to work together on items like the Friday Night Social, Local Transportation Options, and/or other activities the Detachment is coordinating. The National Convention Committee and Host Detachment should also be a local resource to help identify local resources/group to help with Convention Activities.

Another example may be to have a choir part of the S.A.L. Memorial Service. The committee/Detachment should help identify local groups to fulfill the needs. But it is the responsibility of the National Chaplain to coordinate with the Finance Committee and National Liaison to fund and sign any needed contracts/agreements.

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Comment [KAG4]: I made some comments above. That pertain to this section. In the upper part you may want to reference this section and provide a bit more clarity. For both sections.

An additional note: national staff only provides event planning, materials, setup and logistics. We have nothing to do with the convention agenda and timeline of the convention. That part is solely the responsibility of the CDR and ADJ.

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Suggested Timeline

Prior to Fall NEC Meeting - (September 2021)

Prepare & submit report of basic convention ideas

During Fall NEC Meeting - (October 2021)

Meet with previous Convention Chairmen

Brainstorm on convention ideas, menus, outings, venues, & logistics

Determine costs & budget

Present convention report

Between NEC Meetings - (October 2021– April 2022)

Friday Night Dinner - (November – December 2021)

Arrange for location of dinner

Dinner should be at an American Legion Post

Dinner should be sponsored by a Squadron

Arrange for a caterer for dinner

Establish a menu & costs

Determine if transportation is needed

Prepare dinner flyer & reservation form - (March 2022)

Convention Activities - (January – February 2022)

Check for available tours

Check out available location venues

Obtain maps of area attractions

Determine if transportation is needed

Determine costs for activities

Prepare & submit activity flyers & reservation forms - (April 2022)

Convention Pin - (March 2022)

Design convention pin thru Emblems Sales Special Orders

Order convention pins - (April 2022)

Prepare & submit presale reservation form - (April 2022)

Prepare & submit convention report - (April 2022)

During Spring NEC Meeting - (May 2022)

Meet with Convention Committee

Finalize Any Outstanding Issues

Present Convention Report

Pre-Convention - (May – August 2022)

Prepare & submit June SAL newsletter article - (May 2022)

Arrange for activities & outings - (June 2022)

Prepare & submit final convention report - (July 2022)

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During Convention - (August)

- Follow up on activities & outing arrangements
- Setup convention pin distribution
- Follow up on Friday Night Dinner arrangements
- Present final convention report
- Sit back, relax, & have **FUN!**

Future Convention Locations:

Milwaukee, Wisconsin - August 26 - September 1, 2022

Charlotte, North Carolina – August 25-31, 2023

New Orleans, Louisiana – August 23-29, 2024

Louisville, Kentucky ??

~~**Tampa Bay, FL** – August 22-28th, 2025??~~

~~**Louisville, Ky** – August 28th – September 3, 2026~~

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