

November 19, 2019

**MEMORANDUM TO: National Sons of the American Legion Commander, Clint Bolt  
National Sons of the American Legion Adjutant, Anthony Wright  
Internal Affairs SAL Sub-committee Chairman, George West  
National Sons of the American Legion Officers**

**FROM: Robert E. Newman, Chairman, Internal Affairs Commission**

**SUBJECT: Mandatory Changes to SAL Preamble and SAL Constitution**

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The National Adjutant and the National Judge Advocate has directed National Headquarters staff and program directors to immediately screen, edit, and update all publications that are impacted by the Legion Act and the change to the American Legion Preamble. The staff is on a tight timeline to meet the printing deadline for the 2020 distribution, these changes have to take place immediately. Ken George, The Sons of The American Legion Liaison on the national staff, is charged to review the Sons of The American program publications and make the appropriate changes to the Sons of the American Legion Preamble and membership eligibility criteria in all publications.

This year 2019, marked some remarkable changes to The American Legion and, as a result, have a direct impact on the Sons of The American Legion. At The American Legion Fall Meetings October 16-17, 2019, Resolution 1 was submitted, reviewed, and approved by the Internal Affairs Commission and the National Executive Committee. Upon the approval of Resolution 1, it authorized the changing of the 5th sentence of The American Legion's Preamble; *"To preserve the memories and incidences of our associations in the Great Wars."* *"The Great Wars" has been stricken from the Preamble, and it now reads "To preserve the memories and incidences of our associations in all wars."* The SAL preamble has *"The Great Wars"* in the first and fourth sentences. The first sentence, *"Proud possessors of a priceless heritage, we male descendants of veterans of the Great Wars,"* and the fourth sentence: *"to preserve the memories of our former members and the associations of our forefathers in the Great Wars."* In both sentences, *"The Great Wars"* must be removed and replaced with *"All Wars."*

Additional changes made this year was the expansion of membership eligibility from the *"LEGION Act"* that was passed by the 116th Congress. Instead of eight periods of membership eligibility, there are now only two. Those periods are, World War I April 6, 2017- November 11, 1918, and December 7, 1941, to date. For The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion, this greatly expands the membership eligibility potential and also requires the Son's membership application to be changed. Currently it states: *"All male descendants, adopted sons, and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during World War I, World War II, and Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf War, during the delimiting periods set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion."* The new verbiage should be as follows: *"All male descendants, adopted sons, and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during World War I, and December 7, 1941, to date, as set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion."*

I am asking the Sons of the American Legion to also publish these changes to all detachments so these changes get to the membership as soon as possible so we are in compliance with the direction of the National Organization.

If you so choose as a matter of general housekeeping of the SAL constitution and bylaws, you can put forth resolutions at the 2020 Spring Meetings for historical purposes. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ken George at 317-630-1376 or [kgeorge@legion.org](mailto:kgeorge@legion.org).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert E. Newman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "N".

Robert E. Newman, Chairman  
Internal Affairs Commission