

## **A Guide to Guest Protocol**

### **Chain of Command:**

There is a chain of command: President, Secretary and Distinguished Guests Chairman or Committee. This order exists to assure guests' appearances are handled effectively. The President determines who the guests will be. She informs the Secretary, and then appoints a Distinguished Guests Chairman or Committee to execute the practical details of the guests' visits.

### **Invitations:**

The Secretary issues the invitations to the guests. If there is sufficient time, a written invitation is mailed. If time is limited, invitations are issued via telephone with follow-up notes to confirm the date, time, etc. Invitations should always include the date, time, the site, the occasion and the appropriate dress.

### **Lodging/Courtesies:**

If the guest requires lodging, the Secretary is responsible to reserve the necessary accommodations and charge the expense to the appropriate account. She must also make sure that the Distinguished Guests Chairman or Committee has the complimentary tickets and other courtesies to present to the guest upon arrival. If a gift is presented, the President or Secretary will select one that is appropriate.

### **Program Information:**

The guest should be advised in advance of all functions in which he/she is invited to participate.

- ✚ Is the guest giving the main address or bringing greetings?
- ✚ How much time is allotted for the address/greetings?
- ✚ Will the audience be Auxiliary Unit, Department or joint Legion Family/guests?

The following information should be provided to the Distinguished Guests Committee:

- ✚ What will be the length of the guest's visit?
- ✚ In which activities will the guest participate?
- ✚ What other relevant information is needed to allot sufficient time for preparations?

### **Chairman/Committee Responsibilities:**

- ✚ Be familiar with the area in which the guest is to appear.
- ✚ Meet the guest.
- ✚ Introduce him/her to those present at the function.
- ✚ Arrange seating for the guest.
- ✚ Provide guest with necessary information and materials pertaining to the visit.
- ✚ Supply a printed program or agenda (if available) to guest in advance.
- ✚ Attend to the miscellaneous needs of the guest during the appearance, such as transportation, luggage handling, etc.

If the visit is overnight, allow time for the guest to unpack and prepare for the first appearance. If the guest drives to appearance, allow time for unpacking and necessary preparations.

If there are a number of events on the agenda, do not schedule the guest for appearances at every function. Invite the guest to all functions, but offer the opportunity to select only those which he/she wishes to attend.

*The primary responsibility of the Distinguished Guest Chairman is to treat the guest as though the visit was conducted in the Chairman's home.*

**Seating:**

The Presiding Officer is always at the center of the head table, or right off-center first place. The guest of honor is always seated at the right of the Presiding Officer and takes precedence over any other dignitary. Other guests may be seated right, left, right, etc. of the Presiding Officer according to rank; or all guest of honor may be seated to the right of the Presiding Officer, and other dignitaries to her left. If a special chairman is to present a program portion of the meeting, this person is usually seated at the left of the Presiding Officer when there is an honored guest at the Presiding Officer's right.

**Introductions:**

Guests should be escorted to the front on a signal from the chair. Guests are always escorted on the right arm. Guest are brought to the front and around the end of the table, by the American Flag, or the Banner, either is right. Guests of honor are always introduced by the President. (Introduce any important guest with whom the assembly is not acquainted. Present any important guest whom they already know.)

When you introduce guests of honor for a *bow only*, you introduce the highest ranking guest first and go down the list. If your guests are each to say a few words of greeting or congratulation, then start with the guest of the lowest rank and go up the list so that the last expression comes from the top-ranking guest.

In introducing speakers, be brief, factual and gracious, giving the full name and titles of speakers. Announce the subject and present the speaker. (Speaker should know in advance the time limit for the speech.)

**Receiving Lines:**

The Receiving Line is headed by the President or Chairman. The guest of honor is next to the President, with the other guests following according to rank. A receiving line should not be too long.

**Thank You:**

After honor guest have departed, send them a thank-you note immediately for helping make your meeting a success.

**Ranking:**

Current Officers out rank Past Officers; Past Department Officers out rank present Department Officers.

## **Member Protocol**

- 1) Member have rights and obligations –
  - ✦ To demand a copy of the Bylaws and to understand covenants.
  - ✦ To receive all notices and attend all meetings.
  - ✦ To present business, to participate in debate and to vote.
  - ✦ To nominate and to accept office. To resign, if necessary.
  - ✦ To inspect the organization's records.
  - ✦ To insist upon enforcement of the Bylaws.
  - ✦ To pay dues and assessments.
  - ✦ To accept majority rule on decisions.
  - ✦ To accept elected Officers whether she is the Partner's choice or not and to be loyal.
  - ✦ To bring in new Members and generally promote the objects and aims of the organization.
- 2) Protocol demands that members arrive on time for meetings and do not leave until the meeting is adjourned.
- 3) Do not stand waiting for recognition when another already has the floor.
- 4) Do not fail to be seated at once if someone rises to a point of order while you have the floor.
- 5) Never interrupt another speaker, unless the Law gives you that right.
- 6) Do not try to compete with the speaker by chitchat with your neighbor.
- 7) In speaking, avoid personalities and be brief. Be courteous as well as correct.
- 8) Do not call "Question" – let silence indicate that the assembly is ready to vote.
- 9) Avoid cliques – they break up organizations.
- 10) Do not sleep in the meeting, do not doodle and do not whisper.
- 11) Do not sit on your hands when applause is in order.
- 12) Good manners of the assembly demonstrate knowledge of Protocol.
- 13) Be a contributing member and serve on committees.
- 14) Be prompt on paying dues as well as prompt at meetings.