

# Highland Lakes Honor Guard (HLHG) 7 Dec 24

## Administrative Guide for Unit Operations

The following Guidelines were approved by the affirmative vote of a quorum of active members, which are recorded in the archive report and published in the minutes. The absence of any Veto confirms that all Officers approved of the voting process and results, as specified in this document.

**MISSION Primary** Honor the service of lost Veterans and Members of the US Armed Forces by rendering cost free, full military funeral honors, while providing aid and comfort to their families.

**Secondary:** Limited community color guard support for events whose primary purpose is to honor Veterans, Military, and lost first responders.

**Membership** Primary membership of the HLHG will consist of at least 75 percent veterans who served in the US Armed Forces. The remaining members up to 97.5 percent, can be College ROTC/Service Academy Cadets, Spouses, Widows, Widowers or Relatives of Veterans, as well as Ancestors and Lineal Descendants of same. The last 2.5 percent must be voting age US Citizens who have high standards of moral character, citizenship, patriotism, service, and love of country. Dishonorable discharges and felons are not eligible. Membership in the HLHG is not transferable or assignable. Only Military Veterans and active Law Enforcement personnel may participate in rifle volleys.

**Removal, Resignation and Reinstatement** Admission to, removal from, and reinstatement of membership will only be official with an affirmative vote of the majority of the Officers. Any member may resign from the HLHG by submitting a written resignation to the Commander, which need not be accepted to be effective. A former member may submit a written request for reinstatement for consideration by the Officers.

**Uniforms** All members are required to provide and maintain their own uniform in accordance with the guidelines maintained in the membership section of the Web Page, and seasonal rules are posted under the schedule. When funds and supplies are available, the Treasurer at his discretion, may choose to loan the uniforms to new members, provided they agree to be returned when the member leaves the organization. All exceptions to the standard issue uniforms must be approved by the Quartermaster and may require member financing, to include alterations.

**Meetings of Members** Regularly scheduled meetings will occur on the first Saturday of each month (except July and January) at 1000 at the First Methodist Church of Marble Falls. The December meeting will be reserved for election of Officers. This may be postponed by the Commander for due cause and will automatically extend all officer's terms until an election at the following meeting is held. Notice of Meetings will be delivered by text, email, and posting on the web page.

**Voting Rights** are held only by members in attendance who are in good standing (primarily consisting of regular attendance to Services). Final determination of this will be made by the majority of the Officers which will constitute a quorum. Any member can arrange for a proxy vote in their absence with prior arrangement and officer approval. Email voting will be used when an Officer deems it time sensitive for passage.

**Officers and Responsibilities** In order of seniority, or "Chain of Command", uniform designation is via shoulder epaulets, 4 Bars for Commander, 3 for Deputy Commander, 2 for remaining Officers, 1 1/2 for Duly Appointed Senior Deputies, 1 for Deputies. Seniority for positions of equal rank is determined by time in service.

**Commander** - Chief Executive Officer of the HLHG who supervises and controls all business and affairs. He will preside over all meetings of the membership, to include elections. He may not execute any contract or other instruments without approval of the remaining officers. The Commander may designate subordinate positions to any of the primary Officers as Deputies, such as Scheduler, Web Manager, Armorer, Transportation, Training, or any other duties he feels necessary to further the Mission's success.

**Deputy Commander** - Assume all duties and authority of the Commander in his absence, and is restricted to all the conditions of the Commander. He will handle all service requests from Funeral Homes, Churches, Families or any other sources. This will include verification of eligibility and proper documentation. He will keep a roster of all contact information for each member and supervise all communications to ensure maximum attendance. A record of attendance for all events will be reported to the historian (for archiving) and treasurer (for mileage). He will also oversee the training of new members IAW the HLHG Training plan in Attachment 1.

**Quartermaster-Treasurer** - Will be in charge, have custody of, and be responsible for all funds and securities of the HLHG, Receive and give receipts for all moneys due and payable to the HLHG, and deposit same in the name of the HLHG in our bank accounts. Manage the credit card account.

Write checks and disburse funds to discharge obligations. Funds may not be drawn from the HLHG accounts for amounts greater than \$200 without the approval of the Commander or Vice Commander in addition to the Treasurer, all three of which will have signatures on file with the bank for Checking, Savings, and Credit Card privileges. Only reasonable expenses of members will be reimbursed, and only when justified as a necessary function for our mission. There will be no compensation for position or labor.

Maintain the financial books and records of the HLHG. Prepare financial reports for each membership meeting. Order and purchase all uniforms and other required clothing, insignias, attachments etc., all equipment and supplies, including those needed for rifle maintenance and repair.

Inventory and secure all property. Prepare and maintain all documents related to the issuance, care and safe keeping of rifles, as may be required by governmental authorities. Prepare and issue all forms necessary for Tax-Free status to the IRS.

Members are authorized a mileage reimbursement for all official Honor Guard activities that support the Mission. The Treasurer will manage this system to ensure it does not put our primary budget requirements at risk. He will set a floor based on average annual budget expenses and a ceiling based on average mileage payments. Payments will cease below the floor and double above the ceiling. Whomever pulls the equipment trailer will be paid double for that service. The payment criteria will be reported to the Commander and monthly to the membership.

**Secretary** - Take minutes of the meetings of the members and officers. Supervise the upkeep and updating of all data for the Web Page to include record of memorial services, community events, testimonials, donations, team photos, schedule, and rifle status. Make sure domain name and web hosting contracts are paid on time.

**Gunnery** – Supervise all procedures and conduct all training in M1 and Bugle applications for Full Honors, to include any applicable training notes. This will include new members with basic safety, rifle commands, manual of arms, and best methods for cadence. Select and Train Rifle Commanders: Two Primary that alternate and one backup. In charge of Rifle and Bugle lineup on site to adapt to best conditions and performance, and delegate this when absent.

Supervises SR Dep in charge of the Armory to ensure rifles are kept in optimum condition with sufficient clips and ammo, and in good repair. The Armorer will also supervise cage operations, including loading, clip rotation, and security. When absent, this will be delegated to the next available Armory Deputy. A rifle report will be submitted to the secretary at each monthly meeting for the record.

**Elections** (IAW Attachment 2) The Commander will be nominated and elected by majority vote of the active membership each year at the Annual Meeting. After elected, he will individually nominate the remaining officers for a majority vote of the membership.

If any officer vote fails to muster a majority, successive nominations and voting will continue from the floor until all officer posts are duly elected. In the event there are not enough members nominated, or willing to serve, the remaining Officers will decide the assignment of unelected duties, with consent of the Commander.

**Removal-Reinstatement** The Commander can only be removed by resignation or with a super majority (75%) vote of the membership. This is to protect our leadership, secure it in the hands of the members and keep it from falling under outside pressures or influences. Any Officer may be asked to resign by the Commander without prejudice, for failure to properly perform their duties, as determined by his judgement and these guidelines. Failure to resign will result in a membership vote of confidence which will determine the outcome.

**Vacancies** Any Office left open after an election, or one who resigns, will result in a repeat of the election process (above) to replace them at the next membership meeting.

**Tie Votes** Any tie votes occurring during any meeting of the membership, or through email and proxy votes, shall be broken by the most senior officer present, or participating.

**Training and Advancements** All training beginning with new recruits, and subsequent advancement will be supervised by the Deputy Commander IAW the Training Plan in Attachment 1. All selections for advancement will be approved by the Commander. The most senior Officer on site will be supervisor of Funerals, or as delegated. This would apply when a junior officer has more complete knowledge and training of every position. The supervisor should be prepared to step into any position should the situation arise.

**Amendments and Major Policy Changes** Any member can submit suggested changes to be discussed at the Monthly Meeting. This includes all information included in this Guide, Funeral Operations, or any Website page. The path to approval must go through the following process:

1. New policy, and changes, will be submitted to the Commander or his Deputy in writing. They will first determine it's need and to what degree, as well as how it will improve the mission. This will result in a draft proposal, or be returned with justification.
2. Approved drafts will be presented to the remaining Officers at the next Officer Call, or by email if deemed time sensitive. Consideration will be prioritized by mission impact, use of resources, and method for implementation.
3. All changes are subject to veto by any Officer for further consideration, but must be accompanied by an explanation and suggested changes to gain approval. A veto override requires 3/4 of active members. In the absence of a veto, a final draft will be formulated and presented to the membership for approval. Final approval requires a quorum (60%) vote of active members as set by leadership.

**Funeral Operations** The details of all positions and procedures for the conduct of Full Honors Funerals are written in 2 documents: the HLHG Handbook and as amended by the "Funeral Operations" notes. These notes expand the details of the Handbook, and in some cases change the procedures. Although separate from this Guide, they will both be formulated, approved, and amended using the same process, which requires a final vote of the membership.

**Exceptions and Commander Approval** For purposes of time, man hours and other efficiencies, many Officer's decisions are made autonomously to perform their assigned duties as listed. When those specific actions are not listed, they are exempt from member approval. Many of these topics are discussed at the Officer Call to come to a consensus of best mission application, impact, and most importantly, improvement. All members are invited to observe, and then comment at the end. The minutes will be approved by all those present, then published for the membership to provide full transparency. Members have the right to change these policies with a request to codify them into this Guide through our Amendment procedure. However, we should keep this to a minimum to allow for future flexibility in our governing documents. Final authority for all areas of this Honor Guard will always rest with the Commander's approval, which includes full responsibility for all consequences.

## **ATTACHMENT 1 - Training Plan**

The two primary sources of training information will be as documented in the HLHG Handbook, and as supplemented by the Review Notes, both posted on the Web Page.

### New Member Preparation:

1. Minimum two Services to observe, including one with complete uniform.
2. Minimum two Services dry firing rifle with dry runs and practice of commands,
3. One hour on Safety and Malfunctions, followed by Live Fire checkout for timing.
  - 3a. Members who wish to open carry in uniform must demonstrate proficiency and safe operation to the Gunnery Officer on a live-fire gun range.

### Progression of new member advancement

4. Door Security – For Chapel Services to assist Bugler and minimize noise.
5. Casket Post – Assist with elastic band, Salute during approach, Taps, and Present
6. Flag Middle – One hour review showing folding and holding, then live service.
7. Bugler – One hour instruction, take one home, first live service will form up with the rifle commander for dry run and oversight during service.
8. Rifle Commander (RC) – same as rifle checkout only commanding, and adding the procedure for inserting brass in the flag. First few live services with an experienced Commander coaching during dry runs, then shooting for them.
  - 8a. RC while shooting
  - 8b. RC single shooter (with spare, safety off)
  - 8c. RC single shooter AND Bugle (when short, when 4 total)

### Front Three

9. Flag Holder same as flag middle
10. Chaplain – dry run off site (with podium and mic)
11. Flag Folder – Demo, training, practice, dry run before live.
12. Present Flag – see fold, speak the part, able to kneel, flag bag, explain tri-fold

### Supervisors

13. Scheduler - Email, Texting, Archive (Web Page)
14. Trailer - Setting up Flags-banner, podium switches and charging, upkeep
15. On-Site Planner-Supervisor – Funeral Director, Family, Flag, Recipient

### Manning Lineups

**Three** – special narrative where folders shoot/toot first (w/Spare), then fold and insert  
**Four** - RC shoots and toots (w/Spare), then brings up the brass.

FIVE	See 4 + add Bugler	[1 Rifle +spare]
SIX	See 5 + add Rifle	[2 Rifles]
SEVEN	See 6 + add Rifle (RC not shooting)	[2 Rifles]
EIGHT	See 7 + add Rifle (or Middle/Door/Casket)	[2 or 3]
NINE	See 8 + add Rifle (or add 2 of 3)	[2, 3, or 4]
TEN	See 9 + add Rifle (or add 3 of 3)	[2, 3, 4, or 5]

## **ATTACHMENT 2 - Officer Elections**

**Commander** - Turns over the floor to the Deputy Commander

**Deputy Commander** - Open's floor to nominations for Commander

Nomination 2nd, nominee - accepts or declines. Others ? Motion to close ?

Show of hands to elect, one nominee at a time, most votes wins.

Ties generate second vote of tied nominees. Second tie decided by the Deputy Cmdr

**Deputy Commander** - Administers the Oath to the new Commander

*"I \_\_\_\_\_, pledge my dedication to execute the duties of my Office to the best of my ability, as specified in the HLHG Administrative Guide for Unit Operations.*

*I will join my fellow officers as we lead the entire organization in the pursuit of our mission to provide outstanding support to the Veteran Families we serve.*

*I will seek to maintain the highest standards of conduct as an example to other members, and to our Community.*

*My priorities will be: the Chain of Command, the Mission and Creed, our Membership, and our Community.*

*I take this oath freely and without reservation, so help me God"*

**Deputy Commander** - Turns over the floor to the Commander

**Commander** – Nominates first choice of remaining Officers one at a time

Nomination of first officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> ?, accepts or declines.

All in favor ?, opposed ?, Commander's discretion whether it's a majority.

If not accepted, floor is open for alternates, one at a time. If the 2nd nominee fails a majority of "Yes" votes, position reverts to incumbent.

Rules for ties are same as Commander.

If no nomination is accepted or elected, Commander delegates those duties among remaining Officers, awaiting volunteer for "Special Election"

**Commander** - Administers Oath to Remaining Officers

**Officer Deputy Appointments** – accept or decline, approval by Commander

**New Insignia**

### ATTACHMENT 3 - Organizational Chart

