

Date: 1 March 2023

To: Bob Borka, COO - Marine Corps League
Russ Miller, National Judge Advocate
National Bylaws Committee

From: Lisa Delk, Department of Georgia Jr. Vice Commandant

Subject: Proposed Amendment to National Administrative Procedures



**AMENDMENT TO NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES
CHAPTER TEN – MISCELLANEOUS
SECTION 10005, RESPECT,
NEW PARAGRAPH C.**

Current:

Section 10005. Respect

a. The Bible shall be opened, placed on an Altar which is covered with a clean and attractive Altar Cloth, during all the meetings of the Marine Corps League. No disrespect to the Bible, by act or word, shall be tolerated. No one shall use the Altar for physical support, and shall not, under any circumstances, use the Altar or Bible as a resting place for any item or material. All space between the Altar and the Chair shall be considered as hallowed ground and shall not be traveled upon while the Bible is open.

b. The Ritual of the Marine Corps League shall be observed and employed at all meetings and appropriate functions to the maximum extent possible.

Proposed: New Paragraph

c. Though widely practiced and accepted as a show of respect, no member, regardless of gender or religious preference, shall be required to “Uncover” (remove the cover) during prayer, religious, or other ceremonies, even when called upon to do so in the Marine Corps League Ritual. It shall remain the right of the individual to choose whether or not to remove their cover.

Rationale:

During my tenure as the Judge Advocate for the Department of Georgia, the most frequent question I received from detachments was whether or not their female members were allowed to remain covered during ritual prayer. Many of them requested a direct reference from the National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures which provided a definitive answer to that question. Unfortunately, there isn't one. There is only the well-established precedent which, whether in consideration of the difference in design of female covers, disheveled appearance caused by repeated removal, or simply pinning the cover in place, allows for females to remain covered.

In February of 2015, the Marine Corps League Ritual was revised to include the phrase “*As to your religious preference, Uncover*”. While the addition of that phrase provides for remaining covered due to one’s religious beliefs, it does not provide any reference to gender as a basis for doing so. The National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures do not address an individual’s right to remain covered at all, irrespective of religious belief or gender. For this reason, the issue remains unclear to many.

What the National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures do make clear, is the non-discrimination policy of the Marine Corps League. (National Bylaws, Article II, Section 210) With that policy in mind, if our female members, or members with certain religious beliefs, are not required to remove their covers, it then follows, that our male members, or those with differing religious beliefs, *cannot* be required to remove their covers.

The addition of this new paragraph will provide clear guidance on any member’s right to choose whether or not they will uncover during prayer, religious, or other ceremonies. It will also serve as a written reference for those members who might request it.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Delk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "D".

Lisa Delk