

**The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA)** is responsible for the set up and order of business meetings. He/she also participates in the presentation and honoring of the Colors at meetings and ceremonies.

At meetings, the Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) should make sure the physical facilities for the meeting are set up properly. Before the meeting, the SA should meet guests or visitors, introduce them to other members of the Detachment, and provide applications to potential members. He/she needs to determine that those present for meetings are authorized according to the by-laws, ritual, or decision of the presiding officer. During the meeting, the SA is to assure order during the meeting - taking action when required to restore order, and to following any directions by the presiding officer.

### **Characteristics and Traits**

- Assertiveness
- Ability to meet and develop confidence in people
- Ability to exercise judgment and prudence in handling difficult situations
- Initiative in supporting job requirements

### **Narrative of Job Accountability and Responsibilities**

**SET UP MEETING ROOM** - The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) should be the first officer to arrive at the scheduled meeting facility. His/her responsibility is to physically set up the room in compliance with the Ritual, or as prescribed by the presiding officer or Board of Trustees. In addition, he/she should assure that the physical elements of the meeting are available which includes lectern, flags, Bible, microphone, and speakers, and/or audio/visual equipment as required. Any other special items required for the meeting, or for guest speakers, or for any other form of program, should be attended to by the SA.

**GREET GUESTS AND MEMBERS** - The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) should be available to greet and introduce members, guests, and program participants. He/she should direct new members and guests to other officers and members. Prospective members should be given information about the Detachment and Marine Corps League, and directed to the Junior Vice Commandant or member of the membership committee. (If one exists) The SA should make members and guests "feel at home."

## **ASSURE THAT PERSONS PRESENT ARE AUTHORIZED TO ATTEND BUSINESS**

**MEETING** - At a closed session for business, only members in good standing are allowed to attend. The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) must determine the qualifications for members to attend this meeting, and excuse those who are not qualified.

In some instances, an “open” meeting may be declared by the presiding officer, in which guests are allowed to attend the business meeting. If any limitations are made on the guests, the SA should be advised of those limitations to assure that those present in the meeting are authorized.

**PRESENT THE COLORS/LEAD “PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE”** - The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) is responsible for assuring that Colors are posted, or that a Color Guard is available to present the Colors during the opening ceremony of the meeting. During the opening ceremony, the presiding officer will call upon the SA to lead the “Pledge of Allegiance” to the United States Flag. At the close of the meeting, the SA will be called on to render a salute to posted Colors, and/or have the Colors retired with salute.

**MAINTAIN ORDER AT MEETINGS** - The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) is required to maintain order at meetings, in conjunction with the presiding officer. The SA should assure that there is no extraneous talking or activity, which is disruptive to the meeting, or subjects being discussed. By initiative or direction, the SA may be required to caution and/or remove any disruptive persons or other factors during the course of a meeting.

The SA needs to be assertive, yet courteous, in maintaining order. In most instances, a simple and quiet reminder to those who may be disruptive is sufficient.

**CLEAN UP OF MEETING AREA** - It is the Sergeant-at-Arm’s (SA) responsibility to make sure that any necessary clean up and policing following a meeting is done properly. If such clean up is required, the SA may designate members to the task, and take responsibility for leaving the facilities in the proper manner.

**RESPOND TO INSTRUCTION FROM THE COMMANDANT** - The Sergeant-at-Arms reports directly to the Commandant in the organization structure, he/she needs to be attentive to direction from the Commandant, or a presiding officer, to carry out plans. (Both immediate and long term) This direction may be in the form of instructions received during the course of a meeting, in which immediate action may need to be taken.

**ABIDE BY THE RITUAL OF OFFICE** - The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) has a participation role in meetings, as prescribed by the Ritual, and other defined job descriptions. The SA should be familiar with all elements of the opening and closing ceremony that require his/her participation and/or leadership.

**OTHER** - Other duties of the Sergeant-at-Arms may include:

- Providing storage of physical items between meetings that include, but are not limited to, flags, Bible, lectern, audio/visual equipment, and other, as may be directed by the Commandant
- Participation on the Detachment membership committee
- Advisor to Commandant and/or Board of Trustees on potential problems
- Assistance to Commandant and Judge Advocate on problem issues
- Providing sign in sheets for guests and members attending meeting
- Assistance to Paymaster as needed, particularly where cash transactions are involved
- May be designated as the “Color Guard Commander” for parades and ceremonies
- May be assigned to coordinate ceremonial honor guards, rifle squads, and joint Color Guard activities

## **Summary**

The Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) plays a key role in the orderly conduct of meetings -beginning with the physical set-up, assuring that items required for the meeting are on hand, and assisting with maintaining order during the meeting. The SA also can help set the “tone” of the meeting by making sure guests and new members are properly introduced and made to feel comfortable before, during, and after the meeting. The SA also assists with membership by providing applications to prospects (and selling them on the Detachment and the League), and providing sign-in sheets (to include name, address, phone) so that guests and prospects can

be contacted in the future.