

# Quick Reference Guide for Post Officers

## Department Judge Advocate General (JAG)









<https://vfwri.org> → Resources → VFW RI-JAG









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The Judge Advocate General is the chief legal officer of the Department. The JAG's role is to advise on law, usage, and compliance with VFW governing documents.

### What the JAG CAN Do

-  Legal Advisor – Provide opinions on the National Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure, Ritual, and Department Bylaws.
-  Bylaws Review – Examine proposed Post/District/Department bylaws and amendments for compliance before approval.
-  Resolutions & Amendments – Assist in drafting resolutions or proposed amendments in proper legal form.
-  Disciplinary Actions – Ensure due process under Article IX: charges, hearings, appeals, and penalties.
-  Compliance Oversight – Advise on incorporation, bonding, insurance, IRS filings, and contracts.
-  Council of Administration – Serve as a voting member; ensure actions comply with governing documents.
-  Ethics & Whistleblower – Receive and review concerns of misconduct or retaliation under Department policy.
-  Rulings – Provide written or verbal rulings on questions of usage, law, or procedure when requested by the Commander or Council.

### What the JAG CANNOT Do

-  Command Authority – The JAG does not overrule nor override the Department Commander.
-  Financial Control – The JAG does not sign checks, approve expenditures, or manage Post/Department funds.
-  Act as Prosecutor or Defense Counsel – The JAG ensures fair process but does not act as the official prosecutor or defense in disciplinary hearings.
-  Override Post Autonomy – Cannot intervene in Post operations unless there is a violation of National/Department Bylaws or a disciplinary process is invoked.
-  Replace Civil Courts – Cannot enforce civil law, settle property disputes, or act as legal counsel in non-VFW matters.
-  Legal Services – The JAG is NOT an attorney and does not provide legal advice to members outside of VFW business.

### Bottom Line

The Department JAG ensures fairness, compliance, and integrity across all levels of the organization. If your question involves bylaws, proper procedure, due process, or compliance with VFW rules, the JAG is here to help.

Remember that your RI Department JAG is a **volunteer position** which is uncompensated, however will absolutely respond to ALL complaints, concerns, or other issues received. That being said, please be understanding of time constraints. Do not expect rushed last-minute requests to be answered quickly, especially if they are complex.